A PHENOMENOLOGY OF FLESH: HEIDEGGER, THE BODY, AND THE WORK OF ART

BY

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Abstract

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This dissertation begins by asking, what is the body, and how does one develop an understanding of the body? In this study, I aim to rework the notions of discursive practices and material phenomena, seeking to examine the relationship between the two in light of the work of art, so conceived within the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, in an attempt to deal with the question: "what is the body?" This dissertation avoids reifying certain normative descriptions of the body or constraining the matter of the body as strictly the effect of discursive power.

I attempt a phenomenological observation about subjectivity and our capacity for meaning-making, which avoids a reduction to both materialism and discourse. My own approach to the topic seeks to gain an existential-ontological understanding of the body through the lens of disclosive affectivity, specifically when experiencing the work of art.

I take as a starting premise that the situated nature of being human is fundamentally corporeal, in a way that is not reducible to either materialism or idealism. This dissertation also aims to see whether it is possible to maintain that bodies change the quality of the space(s) they inhabit and, in turn, to see how space affects the corporeal nature of an entity. In the course of this study, the matter of the body will unfold as more than an instantiation of materiality and more than an effect of language, for it exists and emerges, in its totality, as a kind of liminal space, one that is irreducible to certain categories of thought and analysis, as the experiences of what we will come to call the "lived-body," which is the situation of the person asking the

question of the body, is the very basis and possibility of questioning.

This dissertation will demonstrate how it is that Martin Heidegger's post-metaphysical conceptions of truth, especially those emerging out of a focus on the work of art, provide a means to conceive of the body beyond the matter/language binary prominent in much post-structuralist literature on materiality. In going a step further than being, by taking "being human" as the central concept in Heidegger, I aim to more fully understand corporeality through the lens of later Heidegger's writings on the fourfold, art and space, and dwelling.

There are numerous approaches to aesthetics and philosophy of art from which one can appropriate when inquiring into the nature of the body; an entity, I argue, that is constituted at the point of overlap between materiality and discourse. With a broad understanding of what encompasses objects of art, I see art as a means and a conduit for the perpetual reconstitution of the becoming self, as well as a way to make sense of the self. The work of art is powerful because it "un-conceals" and reveals truths in non-conceptual, non-verbal ways: art shows, it does not tell.

When we think about what it means to be human, to be situated as a material person also capable of thoughts and emotions, this dissertation seeks to know how we develop, shed, change, alter, and deepen a sense of self and what is true. Art fulfills this role in its ideological function and its affective effect. The other contention is that this affectivity is possible only based on a very particular way of expressing what it means to be a material being, and I think this requires a shift from embodiment and body to flesh.

Flesh is that part of ourselves that situates us as an individual and as an entity enmeshed in the world, porous to experience and affected by what we encounter. This dissertation draws a connection between flesh and the lived-body.

We will see that art is born of the flesh, and the body is, in turn, affected by aesthetic experiences. Thus, art is a way to understand the mutually dependent ideas of world, flesh, and lived-body.

The significance of this study, an inquiry into the nature of the body from an existential-ontological approach, is that it reaches for a type of relationality and ontological structure that bears on the social order, to set a foundation for how to approach issues of ethics and justice.

To Landon and Alessandra

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PREFACE

It has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy has heretofore been: a confession on the part of its author and a kind of involuntary and unconscious memoir; moreover, that the moral (or immoral) intentions of every philosophy have every time constituted the real germ of life out of which the entire plant has grown.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

So it is with the absurd: it is a question of breathing with it, of recognizing its lessons and recovering their flesh. In this regard the absurd joy par excellence is creation.

- Albert Camus

And he took the image he had fashioned, and set it in a great furnace, and gave it to the fire. / And out of the bronze of the image of The Sorrow that endureth for Ever *he fashioned an image of* The Pleasure that abideth for a Moment.

- Oscar Wilde, "The Artist"

If Delicate Arch has any significance it lies, I will venture, in the power of the odd and unexpected to startle the sense and surprise the mind out of their ruts of habit, to compel us into a reawakened awareness of the wonderful--that which is of wonder.

- Edward Abbey

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CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Problem

"The thing that arrests me is how we are composed of molecules . . . arranged without our knowledge or consent," wrote Adrienne Rich in her poem "Waking In The Dark."[1] In this poem, Rich dwells on themes such as the body, materiality, and the question of meaning, invoking what only the work of art can point to. In turn, the poem's imagery affects the reader's understanding of the world, a new lens that suggests a truth about the world and herself that she could not have had prior to encountering the verses. Building on this thought, my dissertation probes an important albeit broad question: what is the body, and how does one come to an understanding of the body? The significance of this study, an inquiry into the nature of the body from an existential-ontological approach, seeks to offer new ways to understand relationality and the ontological structure of the social order, for issues that bear directly on ethics and justice. In this study, I aim to rework the notions of discursive practices and material phenomena, seeking to examine the relationship between the two in light of the work of art, so conceived under the umbrella of Heideggerian thought, in an attempt to deal with the question: "what is the body?" The challenge is to describe the body without, on the one hand, reifying certain normative descriptions of the body and, on the other hand, to avoid constraining the matter of the body as strictly the effect of discursive power. This dissertation will demonstrate how it is that Martin Heidegger's post-metaphysical conceptions of truth, especially those emerging out of a focus on the work of art, provide a means to conceive of the body beyond the matter/language binary

[1] Adrienne Rich, Diving Into the Wreck: Poems 1971-1972 (New York: W.W. Norton &Company, Inc., 1973), 7-10.

prominent in much post-structuralist literature on materiality. In the course of this study, the matter of the body will unfold as more than an instantiation of materiality and more than an effect of language, for it exists and emerges, in its totality, as a kind of liminal space that is irreducible to certain categories of thought and analysis, as the experiences of what we will come to call the "lived-body," which is the situation of the person asking the question of the body, is the very basis and possibility of questioning.

Accounts of ontological dimensions of the body respond to questions such as the following: are entities and processes composed of a single type of substance? Does change happen or merely only appear to occur? Is there a unity behind the appearance of change and diversity? What bearing do the aforementioned issues have on relations between entities and on the problem of free will and determinism? This cursory overview begins to reveal the connection between metaphysical claims and what those assertions might entail for ethics and issues of justice.

In their concern for what reality is composed of, materialists argue that matter is the fundamental constituent of entities and processes. Democritus, for example, argued in the Fifth century B.C. that reality is an assemblage of tiny, 'indivisible' atoms in the void. However, consciousness and experiences involving spiritual transcendence challenge the materialist interpretation, inviting dualist accounts that distinguish between the nature of the mind and the nature of matter. Descartes' substance dualism, for example, holds that the mind exists independently of matter and is ontologically distinct. The challenge for mind-body dualism is to explain how it is that the mind and body interact, or to determine if they are separate and yet, somehow, parallel occurrences. In contrast, idealists such as Bishop Berkeley argue that only

perceptions and ideas are real. Berkeley's thesis that "to be is to be perceived" means that the body is real insofar as it can be perceived as an idea for the mind.

The question of the nature of the body is different from the issue of self-identity, and yet how one understands the one issue often informs how the other is understood. They each require working through a set of questions, such as whether there is an underlying essence of the person that remains unchanged even though some characteristics of the person evolve, an essence that allows a person to persist as the same person through time. This would mean that the self is both dynamic, and yet some continuity also remains. Such a study would examine whether the identity of a person is constituted by internal factors, like consciousness, or external factors, such as social interactions and the material world. Ontological assertions, such as those defining the body, shape what it means to be a bodied entity in the larger world. Those assertions influence the perception of what is morphologically possible and thus also determine the difference between what is considered normal-acceptable and abnormal-aberrant.

Negotiating the divergences between and respective merits of materialism and idealism, as schools of thought, honing in on depictions of the body, are issues of knowing-that and are also informative of experiences of the self. Existential-ontological self-examination involves an enigmatic, if not problematic, proximity of the self to the subject of investigation. Heidegger's project is a hermeneutic phenomenology. Heidegger himself writes, "Interpretation is grounded in something we have in advance--in a foreknowing."[2] Dasein has a pre-reflective sense of its being, and has a kind of comportment toward itself, an intuition to ask about its being. The understanding of being, according to phenomenology, emerges only through an understanding of the being of the questioner. The being of the questioner is one and the same as Dasein of

[2] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 119.

Heidegger's fundamental ontology. Being, however, is not to be mistaken as a self-standing entity, which Heidegger is able to demonstrate through a critical analysis of the history of the metaphysics of substance and of presence in the philosophical tradition. Dasein intuits its own being in a pre-thematic way, along a temporal horizon, a structure of the "always already" of its existence, pushing back against the Cartesian "thinking subject" through analysis of the thrownness of being as situational and experiential, as Being-in-the-world. What we find in Heidegger's early writings are references to and reliance upon the concepts space and spatiality, not just time, along with a reliance on an implicit notion of the lived-body, what he described initially in the Nietzsche lectures as the "bodying forth" of being, later expanding on the concept in the Zollikon seminars.[3]

Heidegger's main focus was to delineate pre-theoretical—pre-reflective, unthematic--structures of Being, certain ontological conditions that he developed in the mode of a structure of care: Being-in-the-World characterized by a temporal unity of existence.[4] This characterization of existence is grounded in and provides a rethinking of Aristotle's modes of Being, the Aristotelian idea of "taking-as" that then becomes, for Heidegger, an "always-already" and "being-present-to" one's own state of Being, as a being, an entity concerned with the question of what it means to exist. Heidegger makes a categorical distinction between Being and being, what he refers to as the ontological distinction, in an attempt to avoid the mistake of treating Being as another type of being. Dasein, is not another kind of being or a metaphysical other: Dasein is

[3] See Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volume III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics*, Ed. David Krell (New York, NY: Harper and Row), 1987), 218 and Martin Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, Ed. Medard Boss (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 196.

[4] *Ibid*., section VI.

always the Being-there of an entity. Dasein is not another type of thing; it is the way of existence.

Heidegger's ontological distinction involves the categories ontic and ontological, such that ontic refers to the study of beings and ontology to the study of the being of existence: the ontological takes into account the Being of ontic entities. At the same time, however, the nature of concrete experiences of ontic entities is used to explain the ontological structure of their existence. Ontological accounts abstract from ontic experiences, such that ontic experiences become revelatory of the ontological: ontic existence illuminates and reveals ontological structures of existence.

Finding oneself in the world, in a situation, matters and means something to Dasein such that an affective response is experienced. The nature of Dasein is to be disposed as a receptive being, affected by the situation in which one finds oneself. *Befindlichkeit* is the German term Heidegger used to describe the always-already nature of finding oneself to be in a particular way. Robert D. Stolorow writes, "Heidegger's concepts underscore the exquisite context-dependence and context-sensitivity of emotional experience--context embeddedness that takes on enormous importance in view of intersubjective-systems theory's placing of affectivity at the motivational center of human psychological life."[5] In addition to the ontic psychological effects of being situated, being "thrown" in the world, Heidegger's descriptions of disclosive affectivity highlight the significance of the body for ontology, the significance of what he would later describe as "bodying forth."

We are always "in" a situation, responding to that state or context in an affective mode (i.e., moods arising from how a person senses the situation). *Befindlichkeit* collapses the

[5] Robert D. Stolorow, *World, Affectivity, Trauma: Heidegger and Post-Cartesian Psychoanalysis* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 25.

distinction between the interior and exterior self. Being in a situation is always a bodily experience, an experience that occurs in the concrete context of space. Space is not an empty container for bodies and objects. Space is the context and medium of relational contact; spatiality is a characteristic of bodies in relation. We belong to the world as Being-in-the-world, in such a way that the limits of our bodies are also the beginning, the extension, of the materiality of space. This rendering of corporeality involves a bodying forth of one's being, such that the liminal space between one entity and others involves a point of affectivity. Heidegger writes that to be "affectively self-finding" is a formal ontological structure that he terms *Befindlichkeit.*[6] Disclosive affectivity is central to illuminating ontological structures of existence. Mood is a state of being that cannot be reduced to one lens of explanation. Mood (*Befindlichkeit*) merits discussion as phenomena that is both ontic and ontological in nature. Ontically, mood involves the lived-body, what Heidegger would later describe as a bodying forth. Ontologically, mood is one of a variety of ways by which Dasein is disclosed as being-in-the-world. Hence, we can maintain the categorical distinction between ontic and ontological as mood is described as a multifaceted experience in being human.[7]

Whatever pre-thematic encounter one may have with Being, ontic experiences in and through one's body appear to inform the existential, including the self-identification of gender-specificity, rootedness in historical contexts, and the awareness of place. There is a loose analogy here to the function of Kant's synthetic *apriori.* The brilliance of Kant's synthetic *apriori* was to show that certain analytic judgments depend on synthetic judgments, e.g., deducing numerical analytic judgments depends on having experienced quantity by way of synthetic judgments. To

[6] See Stolorow, 25.

[7] See R. Stolorow and S.N. Elkholy, *Heidegger and a Metaphysics of Feeling: Angst and the Finitude of Being,* (London: Continuum, 2008).

use an argument by analogy, there is no gender-neutral Dasein, only the awareness of Dasein by a gender-specific being if it is the case that ontic experiences precede or at least coincide with that pre-thematic awareness of Being. While we may differentiate categorically between ontic experiences and ontological reflection, the Being of the being abstracting from life as she meditates on existence is also and already thrown in the world, in place, dwelling as a lived-body. Insofar as she is set within a concrete situation, she also has a first-person perspective of that situation from behind her own eyes, her own experience as a lived-body in that situation.

A corporeal body is one kind of materiality, one that becomes what it is and will be insofar as it dwells and emerges in material space. Bodies change the quality of the space(s) they inhabit, and, in turn, space affects the corporeal nature of a thing. Not all bodies are affected by the space they inhabit (affected in a subjective sense). A corporeal being is caught up in space in a subjective sense, such that the person is in a particular affective state. Heidegger describes the work of art as having epistemic and ontic effects on a person, albeit according to the kind of art that is at work. Andrew J. Mitchell's research highlights the connection between art, space, and bodies in Heidegger's thought, especially with regard to sculpture. Mitchell shows how sculpture, specifically, opens up a "new relational space," showing the materiality of space and its effect on human dwelling in an ontological sense.[8] To dwell is to be human. I am looking at space, art, and the body within the writings of Martin Heidegger in an effort to better understand the nature of materiality, generally speaking, but especially to gain an original perspective on human corporeality and what it means to be a lived-body. My major question is about the body and materiality, but this focal question leads me to the importance of flesh for our experience of the lived-body, a phenomenological experience, that cannot be divorced from materiality.

[8] Andrew J. Mitchell, *Heidegger Among the Sculptors* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 19.

Heidegger's phenomenological account of art led him to a critical stance against aesthetics, focusing instead on the ontological and historical significance of art for the ways it forms and informs us of "what is and what matters" in our world at the given time.[9] His critique of aesthetics alleges that the aesthetic approach to art obscures and conceals the true "work of art." Iain Thomson describes art as "ontological paradigms," explaining that, for Heidegger, "great art *works* by selectively focusing an historical community's tacit sense of what is and what matters and reflecting it back to the community, which thereby comes to understand itself in the light of this artwork."[10] From this, we can sense art's significance for value and norms, politics, and human thought.

I will take as a starting premise that the situated nature of being human is fundamentally corporeal in a way that is not reducible to either materialism or idealism. This leads to renegotiating the strict distinction between the ontic and ontological categories as soon as "being human" is the issue. In going a step further than being, by taking "being human" as the central concept in Heidegger, my aim is to more fully understand corporeality through the lens of later Heidegger's writings on the fourfold, art and space, and dwelling.

1.2 Literature Review

The biological body has long been an issue for feminist theorists and philosophers because the opposition between mind and body, women being defined by bodily existence and men by the "higher" mind, naturalizes and reinforces sexism and patriarchy. This issue stood at

[9] See Iain Thomson, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011),41.

[10] *Ibid*., 44.

an impasse until a means to conceive of it without falling back into biological determinism emerged around the early 1990s. Until then, the distinction between sex and gender did allow theorists, however, to show that gender is a social construct and that oppression grows out of discourse, power structures, and ideologies.

Working from the premise that the body can only be understood within discourse—discourse that is fundamentally characterized by relations of power—Judith Butler's account of subjectivity in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) proposed that the gendered subject is constituted through performativity. Her theory incorporates J.L. Austin's theory of performative speech acts and Nietzsche's provocative claim that "there is no doer behind the deed." Action is something done by an agent, but performative actions are distinct in that they have the effect of change and a social consequence due to the effect of change. Performative actions are recognized within a set of norms and signifying relations that confer agency on the gendered subject. Butler proposed that subversive practices such as drag draw on recognized norms and exaggerate them to the point of parody, such that, in the case of drag, femininity is exposed as a manipulable construct. Likewise, butch appearance and behavior expose masculinity as a construct. These kinds of dissident performative practices are an effective critique of heterosexism in the way that binaries such as male/female and masculine/feminine are deconstructed. Others have pointed out, however, that the corporeal body is absent in Butler's theory of agency that otherwise refers to the body as a sign. Susan Bordo contends, "If the body is treated as pure text, subversive, destabilizing elements can be emphasized and freedom and self-determination celebrated; but one is left wondering, is there a

body in this text?"[11] Notwithstanding critiques such as this, Butler's account of gendered subjectivity has heavily influenced gay and lesbian studies, feminism, and queer theory.

Susan Bordo understands the body as analogous to a text but maintains that the body is not a purely textual entity; it is a material entity situated within a specific cultural context. In *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* (1993), her approach is to conceive of the body as a material entity shaped through disciplinary practices (e.g., body modification, fashion, dieting, exercise) that reflect societal norms and expectations. While it is true that second-wave feminism addressed cultural regulation of the body (e.g., reproductive rights) and the privileging of certain bodies over others in the decades preceding Bordo's cultural analysis, she managed to further those insights in at least two very crucial ways. First, she used insights from Foucault to argue that it is not enough to identify who holds power in society, but to recognize how power is used and distributed, and to identify the more insidious manifestations of power functions and disciplinary mechanisms. To this point, Bordo is well known for her research into how anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa became a means for individuals to resist and cope with dominant ideologies, albeit to the detriment of their own bodies. Secondly, Bordo contributed to the attempt among cultural theorists and philosophers to avoid losing the material body as Butler's gendered subjectivity gained widespread influence in the fields.

Elizabeth Grosz also aimed to keep the body at the center of her analysis with the publication of *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (1994). Grosz's attempt to connect subjectivity to corporeality began with the specificity of sexual difference between male and female bodies. Along with arguing that binary sexual differences are fixed by biology, she maintained that socio-historical contexts affect sexual identity and the body, in functioning like a

[11] Susan Bordo, Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 38.

surface for cultural inscription, exists as a multiplicity through other factors (e.g., age, class, physical ability, and race).[12] Grosz slightly shifted her position in subsequent years through an explicitly Darwinian approach that acknowledges a more active role for matter and biology.[13] She began taking a more critical look at the relationship between culture and nature, with the view that these terms are not diametrically opposed. Nature and culture remain separate domains but they each enjoy the process of becoming under the influence of the other.

Feminist science studies focuses on critiquing scientific knowledge and methodologies as forms of masculinist discourse operating under the guise of objective inquiry. However, feminist science studies scholars have started to reveal in their research and publications a readiness to move beyond the anti-biologism of previous decades, due in part to connections made with Speculative Realism[14] and New Materialism. Like Karen Barad's work in philosophy and theoretical physics, interdisciplinary science studies scholar Deboleena Roy is currently juxtaposing agential realism with theories of becoming to further what she calls "becoming molecular" in the natural sciences. Roy aims to put science studies in conversation with philosophies of the subject and asks, "Can we think of a biology where molecules desire to reach out to other molecules, organs and subjectivities and form relations with the intention of becoming-collective?"[15]

[12] Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994).

[13] Elizabeth Grosz, "Darwin and Feminism: Preliminary Investigations For a Possible Alliance," in Alamo, Stacy and Hekman, Susan, Eds., *Material Feminisms* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008).

[14] In 2007, Quentin Meillassoux and other thinkers, including Graham Harmon, Ray Brassier, and Iain Hamilton Grant, convened a conference under the title "Speculative Realism," out of which emerged a movement under the same name. While significant differences exist among Speculative Realists, it is primarily defined by metaphysical realism, albeit reformulated in conversation with the physical sciences and under the influence of quantum physics, specifically.

[15] Deboleena Roy, "Somatic Matters: Becoming Molecular in Molecular Biology," *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* 14 (2007). 4 July 2016 <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue14/roy/roy.html>

"New Materialism" is a movement that also acknowledges agential matter by thinking of reality like a plexus—a web or assemblage—that is perpetually being rearranged and reformulated in response to activity in individual "nerves." Humans are but one kind of thread in the live fabric of reality, a dynamic configuration that lacks both a center and an interior decisively demarcated from an exterior. The "Nonhuman Turn" takes up this very theme and critiques human privilege and the modern human prerogative, which some refer to as the "Anthropocene" era: the historical period in which human industry has directly caused ecological destruction on a global scale.

Some have cautioned that these are not entirely new revelations. Andrew Cole very pointedly asks, "Who ever doubted that nonhuman forces were at work in our world, that agents aren't always people, that things are made of other things, that nonhuman entities can help us digest dinner or turn ants into zombies, that the weather sways elections, and so forth?"[16] I think that there is much to be gained from New Materialism's methodology of decentering the human, the way of emphasizing similarities between objects and things instead of highlighting differences, and theirs is certainly a good faith attempt to allay global ecocide and inequalities. The juxtaposition of materialism and realism mitigates relapses back into biological determinism, essentialism, and metaphysics of presence, all of which have served as planks to hold up various forms of violence, discrimination, and oppressive social structures. Barad writes, "Making knowledge is not simply about making facts but about making worlds, or rather, it is about making specific worldly configurations—not in the sense of making them up ex nihilo, or out of language, beliefs, or ideas, but in the sense of materially engaging as part of the world in

[16] Andrew Cole, "A Questionnaire on Materialisms," October 155 (Winter 2016), 23.

giving it specific material form."[17] In this sense, we absolutely do "make worlds," insofar as this way of thinking can lead to actions, words, and "discursive practices" that cause movement in one direction or another.

Andrew Benjamin examines the relationship between philosophy, painting, and architecture. In his book *Art's Philosophical Work* (2015), he develops a materialist philosophy of art, arguing that the meaning and effects of art are material in nature. His argument is set within a relational ontology, one that takes the "mattering" of art as the interaction between the ideal and material, describing the activity of art through a concept Benjamin refers to as a hand/instrument relation. Hence, the effect of the "work of materials" in the work of art is not an exemplary notion or affect-oriented one, but facilitates and mediates material relations for those present to the work of a particular piece of art.

These arguments about the nature of entities and the mattering of matter still lack a much-needed premise to leap from metaphysics to ethics and politics. I am not persuaded that intra-action, in the way that it describes a deep connection and co-constitution between entities of all kinds, in itself provides a sense of meaning or mandates ethical obligations. Something else is needed to build on the theme of relationality and the possibility of making axiological claims. Another element is needed to account for a sense of responsibility to the other, affect and emotions, and to sort through what it personally means to exist in the world.

1.3 General Approach to the Topic

[17] Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 91.

There are numerous approaches to aesthetics and philosophy of art from which one can appropriate when inquiring into the nature of the body; an entity, I argue, that is constituted at the point of overlap between materiality and discourse. With a broad understanding of what encompasses objects of art, I see art as a means and a conduit for the perpetual reconstitution of the becoming self, as well as a way to make sense of the self. Different kinds of bodies and material entities are involved in the creation and emergence of art. Conversely, the experience of art, or what is referred to as the aesthetic experience, contributes to the emergence of embodied subjects. However, I am not attempting to draw a parallel between the "formation" of the embodied subject and the construction of a work of art. Nor do I mean to say that the body is a kind of aesthetic artifact or object. I am making a phenomenological observation about embodied subjectivity and the capacity for meaning making that avoids a reduction to both materialism and discourse. As I articulated in the previous section, agential realism needs another element in order to make sense of axiological and existential concerns.

The production and reception of art moved from mimesis to meaning in the early twentieth century. Two concerns predominated: (1) the question of what comprises art, what distinguishes objects of art from everyday objects of use and (2) the demoting of Beauty as the purpose and measure of good art. Arthur C. Danto addressed the question of what comprises art and the demotion of Beauty as the purpose and measure of the aesthetic when he published an article entitled "The Artworld" in *The Journal of Philosophy* in 1964. This was, we might recall, the same year that Warhol exhibited *Brillo Box* at the Stable Gallery. Art and the aesthetic have been described in numerous ways since the early Platonic depiction of art as imitation, or *mimesis*. Art's connection to imitation as well as the concept of the beautiful held firm until the early twentieth century when meaning, and eventually metaphor, emerged with great interest

within aesthetics. Danto, who was deeply influenced by Hegel, made the provocative announcement of the "end of art" since it had finally separated itself from the imitation theory and, in the absence of clear criteria strictly separating art from other artifacts and events, must have a purpose previously unrealized.

Danto explores the relationship between philosophy and art in his book *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art* (1983) and, ultimately, concludes that a work of art fundamentally embodies meaning. In other words, the work of art must be about something and it must embody the meaning of the idea it projects. The question of meaning is central in what makes art a work of art, about the relationship between matter and meaning. Danto argued that a material object of art has the capacity to affect an embodied subject who simultaneously experiences and interprets the art. Stepping back from the visual arts and considering music, for example, the work of art as an event or performance also has the capacity to affect the viewer through sensory experience and at the ontological level. The work of art is philosophical in its role as an embodied thought experiment.

Danto locates art as the generator of meaning that is then interpreted and made sense of by the viewer. It establishes a relationship between the art as object and a subject, but it does not account for what occurs in the subject's experience of the object. Aiming to articulate what occurs on the side of the subject in *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding,* Mark Johnson argues, "Aspects of meaning-making are fundamentally aesthetic" and "the arts are . . .crucial to unlocking meaning."[18] Johnson's theory of meaning and language is grounded in sensory experience and empirical data supplied by cognitive neuroscience. In

[18] Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 5.

contrast to thinkers such as John Searle and Donald Davidson, Johnson argues that meaning making is an embodied process emerging out of sensory experiences, and hence that propositions are not the locus of meaning.Art brings to the fore the relationship between value and meaning, showing that the relationship itself emerges from embodied cognition. Meaning is not just the content and substance of what one abstracts from experiences; it is a continual encounter calling the boundaries and borders of the person into question.In his attempt to overcome representationalism, Johnson argues that concepts and metaphors are structures of embodied experience, which is to him synonymously a function of cognition. His aim is to move beyond representationalism and dualisms inherent in propositional theories of language and meaning.

Gianni Vattimo developed his ontology of art and its affective role in constituting being in his book *Art's Claim to Truth*.[19] Vattimo's ontology of art is rich with a Heideggarian influence that calls into question the nature of knowledge and reality. He connects aesthetic beauty with the originality of artwork, suggesting that a work of art, when it is successful, involves opening up a new perspective of the world and consequently reconstituting the world. Art is successful if it fulfills its own law, he argues, which is for art to be what it wants to be. When the law transcends the art produced, and it must, then the work marks a point of origin, an opening, and reorganizes the structure of reality and history. Art is successful in a very concrete way when it also involves the personality of the artist within the content of the artwork: the richer the content, the more successful the art is in constituting a world. Artwork, then, should be understood as a movement—a way in which the world moves. This is the first moment of a successful work of art. The second moment is a disruption and consequent reconstitution of our being-in-the-world according to the work of art's capacity to show a world. Vattimo's ontology

[19] Gianni Vattimo, *Art's Claim to Truth*, Trans. Luca D'Isanto (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

of art attempts to show art's involvement in feeling and the "sphere of affectivity," making the work of art a fundamental determinant of being-in-the-world.

On many accounts, aesthetics is reception-oriented as it concerns what occurs when art is perceived and experience. This account finds meaning in the way art provokes certain feelings and sensations. In contrast, object-oriented theories are without reference to the aesthetic experience. The *aesthetic definition of art* defines an object or event of art as that which produces an aesthetic experience. Noël Carroll, for example, identifies two explanations of what comprises the aesthetic experience, a content-oriented account and an affect-oriented account. She writes of the content-oriented account that "attending to the unity, diversity, and/or intensity of a work (or of its parts) amounts to an aesthetic experience of the work."[20] Which is to identify properties of the artwork with the capacity to induce those very properties in the one perceiving the object or event. In contrast, the affect-oriented account attempts to provide a phenomenology and description of the nature of the aesthetic experience. Carroll explains that this account of "aesthetic experience is marked by the disinterested and sympathetic attention and contemplation of any object of awareness whatsoever for its own sake alone."[21] *Disinterested* reception involves focusing on the artwork on its own terms and *sympathy* means surrendering to it by "allowing ourselves to be guided by its structures and purposes." Contemplating the artwork with focused attention can be pleasurable or challenging, and invites productive introspection that affects the viewer during and afterward. Some objects and events are more suitable for aesthetic experience than others, a birdsong versus the cacophony of noise in a busy hallway, for instance.

[20] Noël Carroll, *Philosophy of Art: A Contemporary Introduction* (London & New York: Routledge, 1999), 168.

[21] *Ibid.*, 170.

Conceptions and approaches to art must always continue to develop and to embrace new techniques, as art developed in the past differs from that in the present context. For example, art in the age of capitalism emerges from an entirely different political and social situation than the Greek or Renaissance eras. Religious ideas and rituals and what it means to be human also shift dramatically through time, which is reflected in the form and function of artistic objects and practices. Walter Benjamin writes, "During long periods of history, the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence. The manner in which human sense perception is organized, the medium in which it is accomplished, is determined not only by nature but by historical circumstances as well."[22] Benjamin goes on to describe the advent of film and the mechanical reproduction of art (e.g., lithography and photography) as having most greatly shifted the meaning of art and diminishing the aura (i.e., the originality and uniqueness of art pieces). "The uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being imbedded in the fabric of tradition," writes Benjamin as he positions modern art within the practice of politics and mass media, arguing that art can now be appreciated for its potential use in revolutionary changes in society.

My approach to the topic seeks to gain an existential-ontological understanding of the body through the lens of disclosive affectivity, specifically when experiencing the work of art. I will avoid using the word "embodied" throughout these chapters because it presents a theoretical problem that I am trying to overcome through this project. "Embodied" implies that a person is in state of embodiment, such that the person's original state is not an em/bodied one. The prefixes en- and em- denote that a thing is in a place, position, or state designated by the stem word. In this case, a thing is in a place, position, or state of being bodied. If the prefix "em-" is

[22] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Trans. Harry Zohn, *Illuminations* (New York, Schocken Books, 1968), 222.

applied then it seems to be the case that this thing, this thing that now has a body, is another type of thing, a more original and essential thing, prior to becoming bodied. We will find that Heidegger and many other thinkers surveyed in this project distinguish between *Körper* and *Leib*, which is to distinguish between the corporeal body and the lived-body, respectively.

As an initial assertion in this study, the work of art is powerful because it "un-conceals" and reveals truths in non-conceptual, non-verbal ways: art shows, it does not tell, as Wittgenstein would assert. I aim to see whether it is possible to maintain that bodies change the quality of the space(s) they inhabit and, in turn, to see how space affects the corporeal nature of an entity. The latter endeavor will be helped along by looking at the notion of dwelling, as developed by Heidegger in his later works. Dwelling helps to understand the nature of space in a more general sense than what can be discovered through the work of art. This is important in order to understand the limits of the work of art along with possibilities when dwelling in natural settings, to see how non-art situations also affect our understanding of bodies and materiality.

From the lens of aesthetics, I am primarily focusing on sensation and perception. But I also aim to situate art within the social and political. I am less concerned with taste or beauty, and more interested in honing in on how works of art emerge at the intersection and link ideas and material conditions. In *The Social Production of Art,* Janet Wolff aims to "demystify" the creation of art from a sociological perspective in order to expose its situatedness in culture and ideology. She argues against explaining creativity as the product of transcendent sources and, referencing Anthony Gidden's "duality of structure," describes how art as a confluence of autonomy and structure, a product that materializes out of the "unique" nature of the individual artist and social, political, and economic influences. In this account, ideology gives rise to the

production of art and, consequently, art reinforces ideology. Wolff does not assess aesthetic qualities and the place of bodily experience in her critique of the artist as the origin of meaning.

Wolff believes that art is part of collective action, socially determined in an external and internal sense. She describes two traditions that explain how and why the artist can only be understood as located within social and historical experience. First, the more theoretical tradition maintains that artistic production is situated in ideological networks and reproduces them instead of transcending them. This has predominantly been the European view. The second and more empirically-minded tradition emphasizes that artistic creativity emerges from institutional and organizational contexts. This has largely been the view of Americans. Wolff, in contrast, attempts an analysis of artistic production that accounts for both traditions. She emphasizes artistic subjects as socially constituted and historically situated. Art emerges from particular, local historical contexts, from material and social conditions that provide a framework. A theory of art and a theory of the creation of art can only emerge from conceptions of the subject and what it means to create. Wolff "demystifies" the creation of art in order to expose its situatedness in culture and ideology. However, in her critique of the artist as the origin of meaning in the creation of art, Wolff misses an opportunity to describe how aesthetic qualities affect bodily experience for the artist and for those who experience the works. In this way art becomes about the transmission of ideas and values, which I believe it does in a substantive and meaningful way. But something very basic albeit powerful is at work in art.

I think Wolff is right about the social production of art, and this is key when paired with Heidegger's thesis that the work of art has a truth-disclosing function. But when we think about what it means to be human, to be situated as a material person also capable of thoughts and emotions, I want to know how we develop, shed, change, alter, and deepen a sense of self and

what is true. On the one hand, I think art fulfills this role in its ideological function *and* through its affective effect. My other contention is that this affectivity is possible only on the basis of a very particular way of expressing what it means to be a material being, and I think this requires a shift from embodiment and body to flesh. Flesh is that part of ourselves that situates us as an individual *and* as an entity enmeshed in the world, porous to experience and affected by what we encounter. I will draw a connection between flesh and the lived-body in subsequent chapters. We will see that art is born of the flesh and the body is, in turn, affected by aesthetic experiences.

1.4 Description of the Chapters

This dissertation will progress from a study on the work of art, and its relation to ontology and truth, to subsequent chapters attempting a phenomenology of the body and power dynamics. In Chapter 2, I will explore Heidegger on the Work of Art. I will look at his essay entitled "The Origin of the Work of Art," the first and second versions, and trace shifts that occurred in the later Heidegger on the work of art. I will look at the process and work character of art in Heidegger's thought in order to see what bearing this has on bodying forth and the corporeal nature of the entity that has Dasein as its being.

In Chapter 3, I will investigate the body and the lived-body in Heidegger's writing, paying special attention to whether there was an implicit undercurrent of a material body in Heidegger's early writings. In this chapter, I will look at the question of sex, gender, and Dasein's neutrality, taking up Derrida's analysis in his essay *Geschlecht I.* Derrida explored Heideggerian thought in four separate *Geschlecht* essays in the 1980s. In *Geschlecht I* (1983),

Derrida argues that Heidegger performs an erasure of sexuality when he depicts it in ontic terms, attributing a pre-binary sexuality to the ontological by describing Dasein as gender neutral.

In Chapter 4, I will analyze postmodern and poststructuralist accounts of the materiality of the body, looking into what it means to be a bodied entity enmeshed and emerging from socialiality just as much as materiality. In this chapter I will argue that we are not bound to choose between materiality or idealism when determining what it means to be human, moving toward the significance of the flesh as an under-discussed characterization of what it means to be human.

In Chapter 5, I will pursue a phenomenological investigation of space and spatiality, to see what can be determined about the materiality of space and bodies-in-relation within those spaces. This chapter will require distinguishing between place and space, as well as investigating what it means to distinguish between space in ontic and ontological terms. I will connect the themes of space, bodies, and the work of art by paying special attention to Heidegger's later writings on sculpture.

In Chapter 6, I aim to rethink corporeality in light of Heidegger's contributions in the areas of art and space, concluding my study by synthesizing the prior chapters into a theory of corporeality. I will avoid the term "embodiment" in order to emphasize that we are not beings-in-bodies but beings-bodying-forth. The later Heidegger described dwelling as an essential characteristic of the ontological structure of Dasein. Insofar as one dwells, one is in a place. This assertion from Heidegger will help to understand his shift away from Dasein, as he more readily began to use the term *Ereignis* while also emphasizing the importance of a concept he described as "the fourfold." Ultimately, this study will conclude with a phenomenology of the flesh.

CHAPTER 2:
HEIDEGGER ON THE WORK OF ART

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will trace the development of Heidegger's writings on the work of art in order to see what emerges from his thought for the relationship between the discursive and material, to see how he construes the origin and nature of truth in post-metaphysical terms. Heidegger relates truth to the work of art instead of employing science as the way to truth. There is a difference between "to work" (verb) and "the work" (noun). The work of art is contained in what it does, less so than in what it is. Heidegger will show how truth, how we come to it, has a specific nature, which is that of a happening. The nature of truth is not to be understood as a characteristic or property that marks a thing or situation as fact; truth is a process and happening that brings understanding by unconcealing, manifesting and making intelligible what could not be seen or understood about the world prior to the event of disclosure. In contrast to truth being contained in demonstrations, arrived at through the most careful means of cognition, or uttered in properly formulated propositions, the disclosure of truth is revealed in such a way that the effect of the happening, the experience, affects the person; disclosive affectivity causes a fundamental riff in the person's world, how she sees, understands, and experiences the world henceforth. Truth can only happen in an affective state, a psycho-physiological receptiveness that involves the whole of a person's experience. In this chapter, I will argue that truth emerges and is disclosed at the intersection between the ontic and ontological, such that a person's ontological

situation--being thrown into the world and being-in-the-world--is continually made manifest in ontic terms, as in the concrete albeit ideational work of art. Heidegger would not have articulated the situation in these terms, a phenomenological bridge, because he shifted away from the ontic/ontological distinction after "the turn" in his philosophy. After 1930, Heidegger's question shifted away from the meaning of being to the question of how being unfolds as a historical process. I will argue further on in this study that the body is the very condition for the existential experience, one way to observe a phenomenological bridge between the ontic and ontological, which is flesh, such as is required in order to experience the work of art.

2.2. Development of "The Origin of the Work of Art"

Julian Young identifies the following periods in Heidegger's path of thinking: early Heidegger (pre-1930), middle Heidegger (1930-1938), and late Heidegger (post-1938). Young also identifies the post-war Heidegger (1946-) as an important period in the development of his thought.[23] "The Origin of the Work of Art" essay belongs to the middle Heidegger, as he completed the essay in 1936, and Young reminds us that the piece was merely the beginning of Heidegger's thinking on art.[24] Young also reminds us that the study of "The Origin of the Work of Art" should take into account Heidegger's other writings on art that were also produced in the 1930s. While "The Origin of the Work of Art" tends to receive the most attention, Heidegger wrote at least three lectures on Hölderlin and poetry in 1934-36. *Introduction to Metaphysics*,

[23] For a history of the development of "The Origin of the Work of Art," see Julian Young's *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, Jacques Taminiaux's "The Origin of 'The Origin of the Work of Art'", Hubert Dreyfus's chapter in the *Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, and Robert Bernasconi's "The Greatness of the Work of Art."

[24] Julian Young, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 5.

written in 1935, also focuses a great deal on art, and Volume 1 of the Nietzsche lectures of 1936-37 elaborated on the will to power as art.

"The Origin of the Work of Art" developed through a series of lectures. The first lecture, entitled "Concerning the Origin of the Work of Art,' was given in Freiburg on November 13, 1935 to the Society of Art Sciences. The Freiburg version of the essay, the first version, is only about one-third the length of the final version, and this version focuses primarily on the concept of "work." The second lecture was given in Zurich in January of 1936. The final lecture was a series of three given in Frankfurt on November 17 and 24 and December 4, 1936, to the *Freien Deutschen Hochstift.* The most well-known version of "The Origin of the Work of Art" was published in *Holzwege* in 1950 and included an Afterword (the Afterward was written sometime after 1936). Heidegger also wrote an addendum to the essay in 1956. Finally, the final version of the essay has three major sections: "Thing and Work," "The Work of Art," and "Truth and Art."

Françoise Dastur observes that in the Freiburg lecture Heidegger focuses on the concept of work.[25] Whereas, in the later Frankfurt lecture Heidegger arrives at the concept of work through the concept of the "thing," an idea he also introduced in the 1930s and continued to develop through the early 1950s.[26] Heidegger regards a "thing" as that which is whether it is perceived or not. An object, in contrast, is perceived, thought, or remembered. Heidegger's "thing" and his notion of object, however, are not to be confused with Kant's "thing in itself" or the Kantian idea of the object of perception. In writing "The Thing," Heidegger was in part giving a nuanced response to Kant's idea of objects and the nature of thought. Heidegger

[25] Françoise Dastur, "Heidegger's Freiburg Version of the Origin of the Work of Art" in *Heidegger Toward the Turn: Essays on the Work of the 1930s,* Ed. James Risser (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999).

[26] The Frankfurt version of "The Origin of the Work of Art" also takes a stronger position on the difference between the work of art and equipment.

clarifies, “Because the word *thing* as used in Western metaphysics denotes that which is at all and is something in some way or other, the meaning of the name “thing” varies with the interpretation of that which is--of entities.”[27] One must understand Being in order to understand the “thing”: a thing is a thing insofar as it is, that which is.

Heidegger rejects the artist as the origin of the work of art even as he affirms that the artist can be considered the cause of the art, Dastur points out.[28] An origin is the ground and situation of possibility in which something arises, the cause of *the activity or process* by which a thing emerges and comes into being. Past art works, those viewed from outside of their historical context, are separated from their origin (the “springing forth” aspect Heidegger discusses shortly on). Contrary to tools, which are merely a part of the world they were created within, works of art help to initiate that world. Works of art display a “as been” (*gewesen*) character.

Heidegger also rejects the idea that art is merely a product, an object that is present-at-hand. This is not how we come to know what art is.[29] Instead of coming to know what art is by looking at objects of art, we look at art and realize that we already have a conception of what art is. That conception is what allows us to recognize art when we see it. Heidegger openly acknowledges the circularity of this argument, but adds that recognizing a thing as a work of art certainly depends on the manner in which a person gets “into” the circle.

By focusing on truth as *aletheia*, Heidegger attempts to get beyond metaphysical and aesthetical conceptions of truth. To do this, Heidegger must present art as something other than

[27] Heidegger, “The Thing,” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Trans. Albert Hofsadter (New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1975), 176.

[28] Dastur, 122.

[29] In Heidegger’s *Introduction to Metaphysics*, *techne* is developed as a form of knowledge that brings Being into being. This concept is in the background, as the work of art is a type of *techne*.

and more than representation. *Aletheia* translates as "unconcealment" and refers to the nature of truth being apprehended or discovered. This shift in the essence of art also takes up the issue of what it means to know, for art to be an issue of the unconcealment of truth in the world.

World is a significant concept in Heidegger's larger philosophy, and he develops the idea of world with great care in the various pieces he wrote on truth and the place of art.[30] Heidegger describes the work of art as a setting up of a world in the two modes of "placing": setting up (*auf-stellen*) and setting forth (*her-stellen*). The setting forth of art sets up a world. Art is not placed in a world; it places a world. Art is not set up; art sets up a world. Dastur writes, "We should not say that the work of art is set forth but rather that it is in itself a setting forth."[31] Years on, for example, the later Heidegger would describe sculpture has a way of setting up space in the world. Sculpture is not merely set up within a space: sculpture institutes and transforms space as it is set forth within a space.

2.3 Explication of "The Origin of the Work of Art" (1936)

"The Origin of the Work of Art" essay marks Heidegger's turn in philosophy after *Being and Time*. In this essay, he is primarily concerned with truth in relation to art, explicating truth from the domain of the sciences. By focusing on *aletheia,* Heidegger attempts to get beyond metaphysical and aesthetical conceptions of truth. To do this, Heidegger must present art as something other than--more than--representation. This shift in the essence of art also takes up the issue of what it

[30] See Dastur, 129. As Heidegger develops the concept of world in "The Origin of the Work of Art," he no longer regards it solely as the human ontological structure of meaningfulness understood through the concept of equipment and the mood of angst. What we find is Heidegger moving from the concept of the *Umwelt* in *Being and Time* to "The Origin of the Work of Art" notion of a world that can only be indicated through a process of unconcealing. The shift in the concept of world extends as it comes to be depicted in terms of *Geviert* in the 1950s.

[31] Dastur, 127.

means to know, for art to be an issue of the unconcealment of truth. Artwork makes truth manifest, in contrast to "world-disclosure" derived from Dasein's ways of coping with the world in *Being and Time*. The work of art makes the world intelligible, in contrast to representing the world; likewise, we *know* that something is art when a world or aspect of the world is disclosed by a work of art.

In *Being and Time,* Heidegger is concerned with the nature of Dasein in a world that has already been established. We remember the "thrownness" of Dasein into the world in *Being and Time*, the function of coping with the already manifest world. In "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger is concerned with how the world is set up in the first place. Heidegger also introduces the concept of the all-sheltering 'earth' that is in conflict with its counterpart, the world that is the structural whole.

We can already see that Heidegger rejects the idea that art is fundamentally about pleasure and beauty. Artworks are things in the sense that they can be handled and moved around. But he rejects the idea that art works are primarily objects with aesthetic value superimposed onto them. To the contrary, Heidegger argues that art discloses what a thing is. He uses a pair of shoes to illustrate his point. In this essay, Heidegger calls attention to Van Gogh's painting of peasant shoes in order to show that the shoes are involved with the world and with the earth. To the former, the shoes are involved in the world of human activities and items. The shoes are involved with the earth as the natural foundation on which the world rests. While we might regard shoes as merely equipment for walking, and they might even become inconspicuous to a person during use, considering the shoes from the form-matter lens reveals that, not only are they made from specific kinds of material, but the shoes also have a specific function and usefulness imposed on to them. Van Gogh did not merely show shoes with artistic

qualities superimposed on them; the work of art shows the nature of the shoes, insofar as they are involved in the world of the peasant.

Heidegger then calls attention to a Greek temple as a work of art in order to argue against the idea that art is representation, and that art is more than an imitation of the world. The temple reveals that the work of art opens up a world, "sets up" a world for a group of people and "sets forth" its counterpart in the earth. The world set up by the work of art consists of the people going about their activities and decision-making. The earth set forth by the work of art consists of the natural material that provides a foundation for the activity of the world. These two realms are opposed to each other and yet the respective dynamics depend on the other. The work of art shows the two meeting and interacting, disclosing the meeting point as the unconcealment of the truth of being.

> "Setting up a world and setting forth the earth, the work is the instigation of the strife in which the unconcealment of beings as a whole, or truth, is won."[32]

Truth as *aletheia* is the unconcealment of being – out of obscurity and into illumination as presence. The artwork is like a point where concealment and unconcealment negotiate the paradigm for the happening of truth, in terms that affect how people view the world and make decisions based on their view of the world. The point of negotiation is like a "rift" between an old and a new paradigm. The title of Heidegger's essay emphasizes this point of connection between truth and the work of art as a point of origin. Each instance of a new world arising through the work of art is an instance of art letting truth "leap forth" in historical existence.

Heidegger calls attention to the work of art in poetry in an attempt to show that this form of art is prior to the other arts, a move that is based on the priority of linguistic disclosure before

[32] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *Basic Writings* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008), 180.

other forms of disclosure. He does not believe that the other arts emerge from poetry but that the other arts depend on the "projective saying" that is available first to poetry. This is because language does not just communicate what we know; language brings beings out into the open and provides us with something to communicate about.

> "Where there is no language, as in the Being of stone, plant, and animal, there is also no openness of beings, and consequently no openness of nonbeing and of the empty."[33]

Art reveals and articulates the world of the art piece to the viewer, which discloses the understanding of being of that world, and, in doing so, produces (reinforces) a common understanding. Art has ontological functions as it manifests, articulates, and reconfigures culture. We must begin with what Heidegger means by world and being. Think of the world as a context. What happens within that context is done and understood based on the familiarity one has of being in that world—the background structure that is the basis of familiarity and understanding, the condition for understanding being. We know from *Being and Time,* "What is *asked about* in the question to be elaborated is being, that which determines beings as beings, that in terms of which beings have always been understood no matter how they are discussed."[34] The impulse of the work of art is to explicate the meaning of the world for being, and the twin impulse for the earth aspect is to resist a complete abstraction of meaning for being.[35]

The work of art is the event for the happening of truth. Something happens in the space of art. Karen Gover lifts the C.F. Meyer poem "Roman Fountain" from Heidegger's essay and makes a point concerning art as mimesis. The poem is receptive to art as mimesis, or representation of what happens in life.

[33] *Ibid*., 198.

[34] Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 4-5.

[35] *Ibid*., 180.

Roman Fountain

The jet ascends and falling fills
The marble basin circling round;
This, veiling itself over, spills
Into a second basin's ground.
The second in such plenty lives,
Its bubbling flood a third invests,
And each at once receives and gives
And streams and rests.

One wonders if the insertion of the poem is Heidegger's way of holding space for the mimetic character of art. Gover believes that Heidegger argues mimesis away in order to bring it back for a more profound use. She writes, "The great irony is that, in ignoring the artwork embedded in the essay and privileging instead Heidegger's assertions *about* art, we precisely fail to heed his message."[36] Gover points out that Heidegger is not trying to argue away art as mimesis; she argues that Heidegger is contesting truth as representation. She suggests that Heidegger makes a subtle point about the essence of art, which is that the understanding of truth uncovers the understanding of art. Nietzsche holds art and truth in tension, and others interpret art as a way to truth.

The poem itself mentions "Sprung," which is a synonym for "cracks" (*Riss*), which Gover thinks points to a displacing-place in the tension between world and earth. A "sprung leak" is the structure, so to speak, of spacing, a place in a region that opens up. Gover notes the following.

> "Can we fail to notice that the language of this poem--the overflowing, the simultaneity of the giving and receiving, the streaming and resting, the self-veiling of the basin as ground--is strikingly similar to the language that Heidegger uses when speaking of the

[36] Karen Gover, "The Overlooked Work of Art in "The Origin of the Work of Art,"" *International Philosophical Quarterly,* Vol. 48, No. 2 (2008), 144.

> work of art in general as happening of truth, and in particular of this art as poietic founding?"[37]

The poem is meant to echo what happens in the work of art. Water springs from a fountain that is akin to art's movement as *Ur-sprung*, which is likened to (*Riss*) a crack or fissure out of which water appears from the earth. "*Sprung*" can also mean leap or breaking forth, and this is directly related to Heidegger's description of the work of art at the intersection of the earth and world.

2.4 Heidegger's Critique of Philosophical Aesthetics

Heidegger grew critical of aesthetics in his attempt to get to the essence of art and how it shapes a sense of what is and what matters; he sought to get beyond aesthetics and the aestheticization of art in order to understand the work of art, especially for its political, philosophical, and historical significance.[38] Modern philosophical aesthetics looks at humanity's "state of feeling in relation to the beautiful," writes Heidegger (N1 78/GA43), which he regards as the most basic understanding of the aesthetic approach to art. In the first volume of the Nietzsche lectures, Heidegger describes how philosophy of art came to be replaced by aesthetics. He says in very strong terms that art is no longer great because of aesthetics. In this sense, with echoes of Hegel in the background, art has died.

Specific shifts affected how the relation between art and truth was understood: progress in science, secularizing tendencies, and shifts in the very notion of truth displaced art from its

[37] Gover, 151.

[38] See Iain D. Thomson, *Heidegger, Art, and Postmodernity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). In his second chapter, Thomson discusses Heidegger's critique of modern aesthetics, pointing out that Heidegger felt that modern aesthetics overshadowed the "work of art." The idea is, "against aesthetics, for art."

former role in culture. “When the notion of truth is confined to cognitive activity, however, one of the most basic functions of art--its ability to edify and enlighten--seems to be taken away,” writes Charles Guignon.[39] Art came to be understood through the aesthetic lens as statements of truth were believed to originate and emerge more exclusively from the realm of the sciences. Hence, science became associated with facts and knowledge while art became associated with feelings and sensations.[40] Ultimately, this resulted in the ‘subjectivization of art” along with the celebrated status of the artist as one who could tap into a deep sense of meaning amid broad cultural shifts. One root problem in modern aesthetics is the subject/object divide.[41] In the 30s, Heidegger understood the current movement of the age to be “subjectivism,” and thought of art becoming subsumed under subjectivism as well as aesthetics. The issues of subjectivism and the aestheticization of art were inseparable. If the subject/object relation is presupposed in aesthetics, then the relation between subject to the artwork object is one of feeling. The problem pointed out by Thomson is that this creates an irreconcilable divide between the subject and object. Heidegger aims to show us that art is not an object for enjoyment or observation, but that art has the capacity to move us and shift our understanding of truth and the world.

The modern notion of art and the modern understanding of the place of art within culture is unlike Heidegger’s take on the work of art. Whereas Heidegger tried to show the work of art as founding a world, unconcealing and mitigating nihilistic impulses, art is now misunderstood as another resource with cultural and economic value. Art’s historical significance--its capacity to form and inform with regard to what is and what matters--lies in its ability to act as a

[39] Charles Guignon, “Meaning in the Work of Art: A Hermeneutic Perspective,” *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 27 (2003), 28.

[40] Guignon, 28.

[41] Heidegger’s issue with the subject/object divide is put forth in “The Age of the World Picture.”

phenomenological bridge from the ontic to the disclosure of ontological truths.[42] In this way, art is fundamentally connected to other areas of human life, informing and forming normative concepts about what matters in politics, thought, and human history.

Ontological historicity is in the background of Heidegger's view of art, which is the idea that humanity's understanding of what is real, what it means to exist and what it means to be human, shifts over time.[43] An Hegelian-influenced view, these shifts are made intelligible through works of art, such that works of art *present*, even provoke, the happening of truth instead of merely representing or reflecting what is and what matters. This is why Heidegger writes, "Art then is a becoming and happening of truth."[44] Artworks open us to the ontological background and the character of the world, as expressed in the Greek notion of *aletheia*: struggling to disclose what was previously concealed, what emerges at the riff, the faultline, between earth and world.[45]

The work of art is significant for the difference between calculative and meditative thinking, and for what we think of as real in light of the ways we tend to think. Heidegger distinguishes between calculative and meditative thinking, arguing that the latter is not pursued or valued as much as the former in this age. One reason for this is a lack of rootedness, especially to one's homeland, that autochthony required by meditative thinking. Calculative thinking is characterized by planning and investigating. Whereas, meditative thinking aims to discover and make sense of meaning. This relates back to Heidegger's essay on Technology, his warning

[42] Thomson, 41.

[43] Thomson, 43.

[44] Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," 196.

[45] This is very Hegelian and problematic, because why should we grant one background and not several instead?

about how the age of technology changes what it means to be human and that what is lacking is a deep questioning about the meaning of these changes, introspective analysis that would help us guard against being taken in by technology just as we wrongly believe that we are in control. We are not in control or have an adequate sense of the self without meditative thinking.

This points back to something Heidegger foresaw in his essay on "The Question Concerning Technology," which is that shifts in technology most certainly change what it means to be human.[46] Because we tend to see technology in an instrumental sense, it is easy to miss how much the meaning of technology changes what it means to be human, our failure to understand it as a form of knowledge, affecting whether we are able to have a deep and profound sense of place within the world, potentially creating blind spots where we might otherwise by privy to the unconcealment of truth and the meaning of being, to use the language of Heidegger. The danger is in allowing technology to slip from human control and failing to see that this has even happened. In Heidegger's account, technology in itself is not bad. However, the nature of change within the technological environment, and the ramifications can be insidious. Technology is a powerful extension of human activity and the danger lies in not properly orienting ourselves within the technological environment.

The above discussion about technology and the nature of thought has ramifications for how we see ourselves in the world, with a parallel for how the ways in which we regard and *use* art affects our worldview and what we consider true. Heidegger's description of art's historical role resonates with Walter Benjamin's view. Thomson writes that art is "populist and aims to be revolutionary, "grounds history" and "allows truth to spring forth," and "embodies and reinforces a sense of what is and what matters." However, then an ontotheology finds its place. "In this

[46] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" (1954)

way, an artwork can first open up the historical sense for what is and what matters that an ontotheology will subsequently disseminate."[47] What exactly is so problematic about ontotheology and how does it function in the history of thought?

One way to understand onto-theology is that it is faith's recognition of God and self in either the Name or the concept of God, the intertwinement of faith and knowledge. Ontotheology is metaphysics constituted by thinking of God on the model of things with Being; understood on the model of things such that God is the highest and supreme being. Kant says that the term "onto-theology" is used to describe the attempt to prove the existence of God "through mere concepts, without the help of any experience whatsoever."[48] This is very different from Heidegger, who writes that ontotheology is conceptual idolatry. *Being and Time*'s crucial move is the hermeneutical turn, showing the finitude of human thought, as well as human pride that refuses to accept the limits of human knowledge.

The issue with onto-theology is less about whether there is a divine knower and less about what is said of God. The issue is *how* we say it, for what purpose, and in the service of what project. Heidegger repeatedly insists on the atheistic character of philosophy and his critique of ontotheology is directed at the metaphysical God, an idol of subjectivity. Merold Westphal believes that this atheism is methodological and not substantive. Heidegger takes an ontically negative stance on the question of God's reality. But, more importantly, his view that philosophy is atheistic is because, as Westphal writes, "It asks ontological questions that are prior to all ontic questions and neutral with respect to all ontic answers."[49] For Heidegger, faith is

[47] Thomson, 43.

[48] Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason,* Trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 525.

[49] Merold Westphal, *Overcoming Onto-Theology: Toward a Postmodern Christian Faith,* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2001), 10.

the "appropriate" of revelation, and theology is the "thematizing" of faith." Hegel, in contrast, believes that it is the task of philosophy to thematize faith by transforming faith into knowledge. Heidegger had reason for criticizing God as causa sui. God as *causa sui* and *causa prima* in a specific context "corresponds to the reason-giving path back to the *ultima ratio.*"[50] Heidegger's criticism is founded on philosophy as "a technique for explaining from highest causes in order to have the world at the disposal of humans in a theoretical and practical sense. The forgetfulness of being in metaphysics is part of the early and late Heidegger. But it's not until the late Heidegger that the critique is called onto-theology. From the outset, metaphysics has been onto-theologically constituted.

2.4.1 Heidegger on "The Age of the World Picture" (1938)

In the modern age, the ground of the world is conceived of in Christian terms and taken as absolute; it is a worldview, and this worldview contains implicit conceptions of being and the nature of truth. So we find that every age is background-dependent, what Heidegger describes as "an open region within which [knowing] operates."[51] Knowing is itself a mode, such that there are modes of thought, ways in which things are done in a given age, emerging from the conception of being and truth for that age.

In the modern age, for example, for mathematical science to be what it is, is constrained by the obligations of exactness, a ground plan laid out by certain scientific laws, and the rigor of

[50] Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, Trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1969), 60.

[51] Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture," in *The Heidegger Reader*, Trans. Jerome Veith (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 209.

procedure. All of this amounts to a method, and the method requires taking what is "changeable" and making it hold still for observation, to become facts used for research. That which is changeable and then becomes objectified, Heidegger writes, initially comes to us "in the full multiplicity of its levels and interweavings."[52] To observe a particular aspect, the "changeable" has to be viewed as a snapshot of what it actually is; the particulars of the phenomena must become an object--objectified--if it is to be studied. Facts acquire the appearance of fixedness while the phenomena itself, out of which facts are derived, maintain the "constancy of their change."[53] Heidegger writes that the situation of representing objects involves both clarification and explanation.

> "Explanation always has two sides to it. It accounts for something unknown through something known, and at the same time confirms the known through that unknown. Explanation takes place in investigation. In the natural sciences this happens in the experiment, always according to the nature of the field of investigation and the kind of explanation aimed at. However, natural science does not first become research through experiment. It is rather the other way round: experiment is only possible where knowledge of nature has already transformed itself into research. It is only because contemporary physics is a physics that is essentially mathematical that is is capable of being experimental."[54]

Heidegger points out that science, or any attempt to represent the facts of objects, does not begin with investigation and research. Such projects are preceded by axioms: premises and starting points already established by the field of study, the situation out of which investigation and research take place. At root is a metaphysical ground, a way in which beings and the concept of truth are understood.[55] Within this scheme, the attempt to explain nature, and even history,

[52] *Ibid.*, 211.

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *Ibid.*, 216.

results in a representation of nature and history, insofar as they are treated as objects for research. This tends to result in mistaking the representation of objects for their being, what Heidegger calls an "objectification of being." Rightly naming Descartes as the figure responsible for the modern shift to subject thinking, Heidegger points out that the subject who construes the things of the world--even the world itself--as objects for representation makes himself the "primary and genuine *subjectum*."[56]

Heidegger reacted against the situation of subjects being confronted by objects, arguing that we are not related to the world as subjects to objects. Contra Husserl, we are also not related to phenomena by consciousness or intentionality. Rather than prioritizing knowing *that* something is of this character or that essence, Heidegger understood the relationship between being and the world through a "knowing *how*," through the equipmental nature of things within the reach of being. Instead of trying to understand objects by formulating the right concept of the object, Heidegger paid attention to how one approaches the thing at all, how the thing is used, in order to define that thing as part of one's world. In other words, instead of objectifying the object I would consider how I engage with the object, what it becomes to me in the process of engagement and use, and how the object fits in the world, an object among other objects. When paying attention to a thing as "ready to hand" ('*Zuhanden'*) before it becomes "objectively present" (*'vorhanden'*), what comes into focus is the mode of apprehension as a structure of understanding. I only come to understand what a hammer is as a thing when I use the hammer to strike another thing. I understand what a jug is when I observe the cavity of a jug filled with liquid, holding the liquid, and then watching the liquid poured out.

[56] *Ibid.,* 217.

In addition to explicating the meaning of being, Heidegger understood one of the other major tasks of philosophy to be the investigation of background practices and assumptions informing everyday life. However, it is not that background practices and knowledge precede the everyday, even as they inform how we go about our lives. Rather, how we are in the world, everdayness and the practical ways of being, inform theoretical forms of thought. We interpret what we experience in the world, and we can interpret only on the basis of what we assume and experience. That is to say, the structure of understanding is to interpret things as they become manifest, perceived by us, within specific contexts and concrete practices. When a thing becomes manifest to us, perceived by the experiencing subject, the thing is not interpreted in a neutral, value-free way. There is no vacuum for thought or interpretation to occur; we are unable to see or understand the essence of things because things only ever manifest within a context, and through a practice or experience. The moment of coming into existence coincides with being thrown into a world that is already full of meaning, value-laden, such that we go then go through life with already-acquired suppositions, facing everyday tasks and problem-solving having already gained some perception of how the world is and operates. Whether that understanding we have correlates with facts about the essence and reality of things is not the way to go about scrutinizing the nature of knowledge and belief. Rather than appeasing the skeptic, Heidegger felt it important to characterize and understand the very nature of understanding, the ways in which we perceive phenomena and the framework and conditions for our experiences. This approach provides a means to explore the meaning of existence itself.

Heidegger addresses skepticism in *Being and Time.* However, he did not aim to answer the problems of epistemology, per se. He was concerned about the tendency of philosophers to separate the mind and the world. Heidegger challenged the idea that the problem of knowledge is

overcome by a subject we can properly objectify the objects of perception. To Heidegger, understanding is not about developing a proper method of thinking; understanding is gained by looking into the conditions and nature of being, by peeling away assumptions about Dasein, the being that "is concerned in its being *with* this being." Heidegger explained, "Reflection is the courage to put up for question the truth of one's own presuppositions and the space of one's own goals."[57]

2.4.2 Nietzsche on Art and Truth

Yet, Heidegger was not content to remain pessimistic on the state of art; he could not but find a way forward as he developed the relation of art to being and truth. He was helped by Nietzsche in this regard: while traditional aesthetics deals with human feeling and the beautiful, Nietzsche fundamentally saw art as a countermovement to nihilism. When looking into Nietzsche's view of art, it is important to recall the centrality of the will to power: he used art to develop the concept of the will to power, fleshing out the inherent connection between will to power and values. As Nietzsche described, will to power is the impulse to organize chaos, which results in imposing a point of view. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* Nietzsche describes as *creators* those who impose value through interpretation: "Through esteeming alone is there value: and without esteeming, the art of existence would be hollow. Hear this, you creators."[58] Nietzsche

[57] *Ibid.*, 207.

[58] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for None and All,* Trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Viking Penguin Books, 1966), 34. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* Nietzsche describes the will to power as grounded in the passage of time, as the will to power wills the future, the possible, and the not-yet-determined. The will can only progress into the future as struggle, overcoming, and strides toward power. Nietzsche turns from man and god to the becoming of all things, to the cosmos as a whole and the totality of all thing in the eternal return of the same. Eternal recurrence is conceived of as cyclical albeit in a twofold sense of eternity: recurrence depends on the infinite nature of the past such that all possibilities are included for the future as it unfolds.

variously describes such creators as artists, inventors, and even liars, as the process of interpreting the "chaos" of life results in the creation of a view that is then imposed as truth and reality delivered over not only to the self but to others as well. Nietzsche argues that we are not privy to an objective view of things as they "really" are; our perspective on the world and even the self is not a collection of facts, only interpretations. He expressed this in *The Genealogy of Morals*, "All seeing is essentially perspective, and so is all knowing. The more emotions we allow to speak in a given matter, the more different eyes we can put on in order to view a given spectacle, the more complete will be our conception of it, the greater our "objectivity.""[59] The takeaway is that no belief, value, or perception of fact can be divorced from a point of view, a perspective that involves interpreting that which is under consideration. This reporting of reality is also a selective not reporting of aspects of reality that results in the survival of some truths along with the incorporation of falsities. This is the nature of perspectival truth and the only truth available to us. When Nietzsche comments on the nature of interpretation, it is important to recall the body as the site and locus of interpretation, taking affective experiences and interpretation as inseparable processes in human experience.

The relationship between art and life is significant in Nietzsche's thought. Art gives us a much-needed illusion, and we need this. However, he holds creativity and art in tension with truthfulness. Art is important not merely because it is a distraction and can increase beauty: art and artistry create value and affirms life, a means for creative transformation. The following passage illustrates the theme of art versus truth in Nietzsche's thought.

> If we had not welcomed the arts and invented this kind of cult of the untrue, then the realization of general untruth and mendaciousness that now comes to us through science--the realization that delusion and error are conditions of human knowledge and sensation--

[59] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, Trans. Francis Golffing (New York: Anchor Books, 1956), 255.

> would be utterly unbearable. *Honesty* would lead to nausea and suicide. But now there is a counterforce against our honesty that helps us to avoid such consequences: art as the *good* will to appearance.[60]

What emerges in Nietzsche's thought is quite other than the traditional view of aesthetics. In the traditional view, meditation on art discloses the human state of feeling, such that the state of feeling in relation to the beautiful is thought to be the beginning point and the aim of aesthetics. This shift resulted in art being understood as a sensory experiment with a focus on beauty instead of a practice that teaches us how to live. Heidegger distinguishes between *theories of art* and the *practice of art*, admitting that, while aesthetics theories have been developed since antiquity, aesthetics has come to represent the practice and experience of art in the modern age. He takes issue with art as an experience and is critical of the idea that experience can disclose what the essence of art is. In contrast, art shows us how to live; it discloses truth and reveals meaning. Heidegger believes that art can and should be involved "as the definitive formation and preservation of beings as a whole."[61] When art becomes about the beautiful, experiences, and pleasure then we no longer need art, not in a fundamental way. Art dies under aesthetics because it becomes a marginal need for individuals and to culture as a whole.

2.5 Walter Benjamin on the Work of Art

To better understand Heidegger's early understanding of art, I will compare and contrast his thought with Walter Benjamin's writings on the work of art. Benjamin provides a political

[60] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Vintage, 1974), 163.

[61] Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes One and Two*, Trans. David Ferrell Krell (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1991), 89.

analysis of the contemporary reproduction of artworks in his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936); he describes a shift in perception with the use and mass access of photography and film in the 20th century. Benjamin, in fact, offers an analysis of a fundamental change in the aesthetic quality, the sensory perception, of the work of art. He is concerned with the relationship between the work of art and political criticism, which is an issue of the relation between material conditions for the work of art and ideas, especially political ideas. Establishing such a connection allowed Benjamin to point to the revolutionary character of art.

Mechanical reproduction, such as what occurs in the process of producing film and photography, strips art of its aura, which is its character of authenticity that yields an experience of significance for the person experiencing the art. Removing art from culture and tradition deprives it of its aura, Benjamin claims, as it no longer serves a ritualistic or religious function. He writes, "Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be."[62] The process of the reproduction of an original into copies, along with mass circulation of those copies, then creates a culture of spectators, observers, and consumers of art.

The shift in sense perception described by Benjamin initiates a fundamental change in humanity's mode of existence, as sensory perception changes affect how we absorb and make sense of visual art. Mass audiences receive art objects through the *technique of reproduction*. However, a reversal occurs when the work of art, in being reproduced, becomes *designed for reproducibility*. Benjamin writes that a painting has an aura but a photograph lacks one in its constitution as an image of an image. The process of reproduction is revolutionary, not merely

[62] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, Trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 220.

because of the increase in copies of an original, but because a new technique in the work of art emerged. For example, Benjamin points to the use of splicing and pasting, enlarging and minimizing, and speeding up or slowing down the pace of films in the course of the editing process. The effect of mechanical reproduction is that the work of art's aura of authenticity and originality fade away.

There are several consequences for the mechanical reproduction of the work of art: in addition to Benjamin's characterization of film, as described above, as a new *technik* of art, he posited the possibility that the audience might become mere absorbers of art, and that the work of art could begin to receive new meanings from the different contexts in which it is viewed. Art's authority would then be derived less from the authority of the auratic tradition, the impact of the original piece's reception, but from the new processes of perceiving mechanically reproduced art. The numerous persons involved in the creation of a film increase the depth of manipulation and the transmission of a message in ways that a painting cannot. Humans then become passive observers of film and do not realize just how much they are absorbing when viewing a film. Because the mechanical reproduction of art could lead to art's consumption of the human at the same time that the human consumes art, or, mass consumption, a radicalized politicization of art could occur in ways in which it has not been used the past. These significant shifts in sense perception and ways of submitting to art could very well signal changes in subjectivity, not just in the aforementioned novel political uses of art.

Benjamin describes human sense perception as an evolving process affected by historical situations and shifts in nature. He describes a dynamic relationship between sense perception, mediums of art, and social changes. Benjamin believes that the loss of the aura for art works was the result of social circumstances, specifically with the trend toward the reproduction of art for

the masses, the desire to disseminate copies en mass.

For Benjamin, the medium of art and the process of its production are connected, together, to their overall impact and meaning. It is important to remember the different uses of art, the background of tradition and social functions of art works, that simultaneously influence art's mediums and forms. Different expressions of art took place along the following lines. Originally, art was used for religion and rituals; it served an instrumental purpose and, only it retrospect, Benjamin admits, do we interpret paintings on the walls of caves, for examples, as works of art, in the way that art is understood today.[63] Later, in the period of the Renaissance, art's importance centered around the cult of beauty. This gave way to the emergence of a type of "negative theology" in art, reaching for "pure art" through the *l'art pour l'art* movement. Then came the impact of the mechanical reproduction of art.

> "For the first time in world history, mechanical reproduction emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual . . . the instance the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being about ritual, it begins to be based on another practice--politics."[64]

Specific sensory changes due to the mechanical production of art involve a more profound experience of apperception. The transformation of experience signaled by the loss of the aura by changes in the production of art is fundamentally about the human ability to sense that there is something more to a thing or a situation, which is fundamentally about making sense of the self and the world--creating and deepening meaning--by encountering objects or situations that have aesthetic value. As Eli Friedlander writes, "The figure of an aura of light emanating from an object and surrounding it, making it slightly more than it is, suggests that there is a space

[63] *Ibid.*, 225.

[64] *Ibid.*, 224.

of meaning that comes with the object and allows us to relate to it significantly."[65] When a person experiences art in such a way that it heralds a sense of significance, a closeness to tradition and history, thus invoking a kind of "memory" of things of importance, then that person can be said to have a shift in consciousness that is apperceptive, comprehending a significant and meaningful moment in such a way that it assimilates into and affects one's previous knowledge and experience.

Heidegger rejects the idea that art is fundamentally about pleasure and beauty, rejecting the idea that art works are primarily things with aesthetic value superimposed on them. To the contrary, Heidegger argues that art discloses what a thing is, unconceals something about the world. Truth as *aletheia* is the unconcealment of being out of obscurity and into illumination as presence. Thus, artwork is a paradigm for the happening of truth, a point in which concealment and unconcealment occur in ways that affect how persons view the world and make decisions based on their view of the world. The point of negotiation, of being challenged by art to see truth, is like a "rift" between an old and a new paradigm in one's view of the self and the world. The title of Heidegger's essay emphasizes this point of connection between truth and the work of art as a point of origin for a new understanding of what reality is. Each instance of a new world arising through the work of art is an instance of art letting truth "leap forth" in historical existence.

Aesthetics, Heidegger notes, is about 'knowledge of human behavior with regard to sense, sensation and feelings, and knowledge of how these are determined."[66] Humans exist in a

[65] Eli Friedlander, *Walter Benjamin: A Philosophical Portrait* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 147.

[66] Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 78.

state of feeling. The beautiful affects the human state of feeling. Aesthetics is careful consideration and study of the "self-showing" of art that elicits a state of feeling, such that the "formation and preservation of beings as a whole" takes place in relation to art. There is a difference between art being the object of aesthetic consideration versus a state of feeling being the object of consideration. Aesthetics is a "manner of inquiry" and its basis is the "state of feeling" provoked by art. To be is to be involved with the pursuit of the will to power. Heidegger describes art as a "configuration" of that will. Meditation on art, ultimately, discloses the human state of feeling, such that the state of feeling in relation to the beautiful is the beginning point as well as the aim of aesthetics. Heidegger's confrontation with aesthetics is framed by Hegel and Nietzsche, as seen in his sixth point on the history of aesthetics.

> "What Hegel asserted concerning art--that it had lost its power to be the definite fashioner and preserver of the absolute--Nietzsche recognized to be the case with the "highest values," religion, morality, and philosophy: the lack of creative force and cohesion in grounding man's historical existence upon beings as a whole. Whereas for Hegel it was art--in contrast to religion, morality, and philosophy--that fell victim to nihilism and became of thing of the past, something nonactual, for Nietzsche art is to be pursued as the counter movement."[67]

While traditional aesthetics deals with human feeling and the beautiful, Nietzsche fundamentally saw art as a countermovement to nihilism.

2.6 The Later Heidegger on the Work of Art

Heidegger shifts away from *Dasein* and turns to *Ereignis* thinking in *Contributions to Philosophy* in his post-1938 period of thought. This means to think about the disclosure of truth in terms of "event," the happening of truth through the horizon of the being of human beings.

[67] *Ibid.*, 90.

There is a fundamental structure of intelligibility for the happening of being or world, and this structure occurs in certain forms of human life, specifically, language. If we recall the historical specificity of human life then we also know that the happening of the disclosure of being or world occurs in and undergoes historical change. To experience the disclosure of truth, to have an epiphany moment in which a person experiences the world as a whole, is to be "appropriated" by *Das Ereignis*. In other words, for Heidegger, truth is a style of the world of a particular culture or epoch.

We might recall what it means to view the work in phenomenological terms: one goes to the things themselves, lets the things show their nature to the observer. This waiting, or receiving, however, is not a passive posture. Ereignis is what Heidegger refers to as dwelling in the truth of being, taking a receptive posture, a posture of listening. Doing so allows a person to gain a new perspective, an insight, into the relational nature of existence, the transience of what *is* at any given time. John Richardson writes:

> "[Ereignis] is of highest importance in Heidegger's later writings—their apex thought. It stands first ontologically. It also names his ultimate good or end, what his writings (implicitly) most preach and call us towards. We need to locate *Ereignis* with respect to the other main epistemic notions—thinking and unconcealment. And we need to form as concrete a sense as possible of what it is—which will be hard, because it lies in the center of his mysteries."[68]

In his later years, Heidegger's view of art expanded beyond language as the "house of being" to shifts in an emphasis on spatial considerations for being and world, not just the importance of temporality. These later emphases are characterized by layers of understanding and receiving the truth of Being. Heidegger places a great deal of weight on language in the task of unconcealing being, the relation between language and being, and language as the framework for meaning and the installing of a world. Specifically poetic language brings one into relation

[68] John Richardson, *Heidegger* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 269.

with language with unconcealed being. Poetry has a special role in unconcealing Being, but sculpture also has a significant place in the truth of Being, showing the relational and dynamic nature of space that has implications for a relational and dynamic nature of Being, and of Truth. However, truth and Being must not be mistaken as synonymous: Being gives insight into Truth from the "bottom up," as an unconcealing of the most fundamental aspects of what is, instead of a top-down containment of truth, one that attempts to control the conditions of truth-seeking.

2.7 Conclusion

I have followed the development of Heidegger's writings on the work of art in this chapter to see what would emerge from his thought for the relationship between the discursive and material, to see how he construes the origin and nature of truth in post-metaphysical terms. We find that art is a phenomenological bridge between experience and interpretation of the meaning of the being that experiences.

The above discussion begs a comment on the work of art and the nature of truth in light of Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism. The Nazi movement was a kind of fruition for what Brecht and Benjamin described as the "aestheticization of politics." Fascist Germany used music, cinema, and imagery in the 1930s and 40s to represent and constitute itself in historical terms. In music and cinema, the work of art showed the true nature of National Socialism just as much as it instantiated the movement in historical terms. This itself illustrates the bridge between the concrete nature of art and the way that the work of art opens up what is most true about the world. In this example, we can see the relationship between the discursive realm and materiality, how one emerges from the other.

In the next chapter, I will focus on Heidegger's view of the body, investigating the allegation that he ignored the fundamental role of the body for human experience and to deepen insights into the relationship between bodily experience and the work of art.

CHAPTER 3:
THE BODY

3.1 Introduction

Martin Heidegger participated in a series of seminars and conversations in 1959-1972 that became known as the Zollikon Seminars. His host and conversation partner was Medard Boss, a Swiss psychiatrist and friend of Heidegger. Heidegger and Boss wrote letters back and forth on a range of topics for several decades, and those letters and seminar conversations contain a number of insights on Heidegger's thoughts on the body, ideas that did not make it into his earlier writings. At the March 3, 1972 Zollikon Seminar, Boss, raised a critique made by Sartre some years prior, pointing to the fact that only six lines of *Being and Time* mentioned the body. Heidegger responded, "I can only counter Sartre's reproach by stating that the body (*das Leibliche*) is the most difficult [to understand] and that I was unable to say more at that time."[69] Heidegger's "body problem" has been addressed by a number of thinkers. Some of the criticisms point out that Heidegger's everyday understanding of things and of equipment presuppose a body. Feminists point out that everyday practices are carried out only within situations of difference--sexual difference and other ways of identifying oneself--and that this also presupposes a body. As early as 1970, Sandra Lee Bartky criticized Heidegger's philosophy as devoid of concrete social concerns and the empirical body, writing, "[Heidegger's] notion of originative thought is far too vacuous and abstract to serve the needs of any radical world-

[69] Martin Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars: Protocols--Conversations--Letters*, Ed. Medard Boss (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 231.

renewing project."[70] A common criticism of Heidegger is that his thought culminates in a disturbing quietism. Another common theme of his critic is that Heidegger wrote about worldliness and being-in-the-world without articulating how it is that one makes contact with the world.

I don't think Heidegger ignores the body in *Being and Time* as much as he tables the issue, as he explained many years later. In fact, Heidegger admitted at the Zollikon meetings that he was entirely aware of the absence of the body in his writing, particularly within *Being and Time*. In that book, he mentioned body primarily within the context of spatiality, which amounted to casting the body as a concept derivative of the ontological concept of space and being-in-the-world, having to abstract from being-*in*-the-world to the implicit understanding that a person has a physical body insofar as a person is ontologically located in the world. It is not that a person is contained within a world, but located and placed. He affirmed that the body is extremely important and he felt that he did not have the philosophical resources or insight to make sense of it, as Heidegger explained in the quote from the paragraph above. Furthermore, I do not think it is the case that Heidegger meant to render the body unimportant even as he failed to mention it or analyze it. The phenomenological body is derivative of the meaning of existence as being-there and being-in-the-world. It is not that we exist because we have a body. After all, it would be problematic to think of the body as the foundation for existence, insofar as "foundation" poses epistemological problems. We cannot conceive of something as a foundation if that thing is itself set within a larger structure, just as the body is set within the larger structure of the world. Furthermore, even if we assume a body, we do not know what the body is. As Kevin Aho points out, Heidegger thinks of Dasein as a horizon of meaning that makes the body

[70] Sandra Lee Bartky, "Originative Thinking in the Later Heidegger," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 30 (1970), 368.

possible, that Dasein is the very basis for the corporeal body (*Körper)* and the possibility of experiencing the lived-body (*Leib).*[71] In contrast to the corporeal body, the lived-body is the body that is only ever mine, the body I experience from within the experience of the self. The experience of the lived-body, however, is possible only on the basis of the corporeal body. But the experience of anything at all--any aspect of experience--requires a being (*Sein),* a being that is there (*Da*), as Aho points out in the following.

> For Heidegger, Dasein is not to be understood in terms of everyday existence or embodied agency but--from his earliest Freiburg lectures onward--as an unfolding historical horizon or space of meaning that is already "there" (*Da*), prior to the emergence of the human body and its various capacities.[72]

While it is possible to explicate a body from Heidegger's writings, we have to remember that he was not interested in the body as much as he was concerned with pointing to the situation that makes such inquiry possible, pointing to the meaning of the being that asks. Heidegger was concerned with the structure of meaning, and yet it can be confusing to understand his regard for the body as he illustrated Dasein's manner with examples from everyday existence, being thrown into the world, and equipmentality. For example, Heidegger relies heavily on the assertion that being-in-the-world is fundamental to Dasein, and to be in a world also means that Dasein is spatially located. Such a situation seems to assume a body; it seems to assume the experience of a lived-body. Heidegger also explain the meaning of being by describing the way in which one uses a hammer, takes note of the equipmental nature of a hammer, which we can assume also requires an arm to make use of an everyday tool.

When Heidegger describes and explains phenomena, it is in light of answering the question of *how* Dasein exists in the world, since there is no way of being and experiencing that

[71] Kevin A. Aho, *Heidegger's Neglect of the Body* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 2009), 3.

[72] *Ibid.*

is not in a worldly way. So it is one thing to ask about body in an ontological sense and another thing to ask about body in an ontic sense. Inquiring about body using the phenomenological method is also different from, say, a metaphysical deduction--the difference between interpreting the body for me and asking in what sense a body is real. For example, concerning "world," Heidegger wants to know what it means to characterize the world as a phenomenon. How can the world be a phenomenon for anyone at all? He must first ask whether this question makes sense. "World" is the type of idea that we are unable to understand apart from its relationship to all other things, in the most general and ontological sense in which Heidegger uses the idea. This is because "world" unifies the whole realm of experience. World is used in a categorical way, such that it cannot be predicated of anything else. In pointing to world in a categorical way, Heidegger is also using it as an existential. The statement "x is" would never make sense if a person tries to use it in predicate form. The philosophical tradition has, in large part, attempted to use "to be" in a predicative way, which is a misunderstanding of what it means to exist. The study of being is about the study of transcendentals, not about predicate or categorical analysis. In other words, being does not help us to distinguish something that is or is not. Such transcendentals either *are* or *they are not*. Heidegger does not simply ask what it means to say that something is; he also asks what transcendentals are. The language of "to be" is verbal; it is an enactment. The existential mode tell us *how* being is enacted, how it is performed. Just as Aristotle and Kant recognized categories as ways to describe things, existentials concentrate on what is presupposed in the categories--*how it is*. This underscores the importance of keeping the ontic/ontological distinction and the method of analysis in mind when interpreting Heidegger.

3.2. The Ontic/Ontological Distinction

There are two levels in the analysis of Dasein. The ontic level is concerned with the concrete, specific, and local matter of Dasein , that is, the factual matter open to observation, which Heidegger calls existentiell. The ontological level is, on the other hand, concerned with the structure that underlies and instantializes the ontical, or existentiell matter, and provides a phenomenological description. This deep structure is called by Heidegger existentiale.

Phenomenologists distinguish between *Leib* and *Körper. Körper* is the material or physical body--the "object" body. *Leib* is the lived-body, the phenomenological body of experience, not the body that concerns the natural sciences, anatomy, or physiology.[73] *Leib* is my bodily experience and the way I experience other bodies. This experience can have various kinds of moods, of enjoyment or alienation, burden or freedom. Much later in his career at the Le Thor Seminar in 1968, Heidegger claimed the following.

> … when we step on a scale, we do not weigh our "lived-body" but merely the weight of our "body." Or further, the limit of the "lived-body" is not the limit of the body." The limit of the body is the skin. The limit of the "lived-body" is much more difficult to determine. It is not "world," but it is perhaps just a little "environment."[74]

Maintaining the distinction between the corporeal body, subjectivity in the phenomenological body still takes the form of engagement with the world, and that phenomenon can be direct and pre-thematic while also later becoming the object of reflection and analysis. As Heidegger formulates his approach to the question of the "who" of Dasein he asserts that Dasein is prior to the "objective presence" of the subject or self. In other words, it is insufficient to reflect thematically on the given "I" if one is concerned with phenomenal demonstrations or

[73] In Husserl's lecture courses of 1907 and 1910/11, he gave phenomenological descriptions of the body as one's "center of orientation," the means by which a person senses and goes about the world.

[74] *Four Seminars: Le Thor 1966, 1968, 1969, Zähringen 1973.* Trans. Andrew Mitchell and François Raffoul, 2003, 32.

concrete characteristics of the mode of Dasein. This is not to say that when one reflects on the "I" or herself as a self that she does not make the connection that, yes, "ontically, of this being that "I" am it." This is only a formal indication and initial awareness and does not yet reveal what is most characteristic of Dasein. Heidegger writes, "The clarification of being-in-the-world showed that a mere subject without a world "is" not initially and is also never given. And, thus, an isolated I without the others is in the end just as far from being given initially."[75]Heidegger wants to show what is most characteristic of Dasein; that is, the existential question of the "who" of Dasein points to being among others, existing within a shared world. In pointing to or raising the question of "I," one also makes an implicit reference to the You, S/he, We, and all others co-present to the "I." This admits to the idea that a being is always already a being-in-relation, that being-in-the-world means to shares space with a plurality of beings: to be a being-with.

"World" is an easily confused concept in terms of the ontic/ontological distinction. The shared world is not merely a backdrop context or situation; the world is a structural aspect of Dasein. Heidegger explains.

> "Dasein are themselves "in" the world as being-in-the-world in which they are at the same time encountered. . . So, if one wanted to identify the world in general with innerworldly beings, one would have to say the "world" is also Dasein."[76]

Encountering others involves being oriented to one's own existence. Even though Heidegger distinguishes between others and the "I," the "I" is always part of "the others" as a "being-there-too" in the world. Beings encounters others in the context of everyday existence and make themselves available and attentive, or unavailable and inattentive. But we have to keep

[75] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 116.

[76] *Ibid*., 118.

in mind that these descriptions involve structural characteristics of Dasein, which is a different frame of analysis from interactions that we find ourselves involved with in ontic activity.

Heidegger distinguishes this concept of being-with from intersubjectivity. The difference being a categorical one, as "being-in" and "world" are understood in ontological terms.

> "On the basis of this *like-with* being-in-the-world, the world is always already the one that I share with others. The world of Dasein is a *with-world*. Being-in is *being-with* other. The innerworldly being-in-itself of other is *Mit-dasein*."[77]

Intersubjectivity, on the other hand, describes a relationship between two subjects. Heidegger's sense of "being-with" points to a context, a structure, that is prior to an awareness of being-in-the-world, prior to recognizing others within that same world, as the unthematic disclosure of one's being is prior to the point of reflecting back on that disclosure. In other words, being-with is ontologically constitutive of existence, such that the "I" that exists is present to the You, S/he, We, and all others co-present to the "I." A being's existential constitution is also an unthematic disclosures of the we/they: *Dasein* is also *Mit-dasein,* to use Heidegger's early designation for the social nature of being, what we can for now tentatively consider the relational nature of being.

3.3 Sex, Gender, and Dasein's Neutrality

Derrida wrote a series of essays in which he situated *Geschlecht* in Heidegger's writings. *Geschlecht* is the German term for "sexuality" and "generation" It is also translated as "gender." Patricia Huntington describes ""*Geschlecht"* as a "polyvalent term meaning race, gender,

[77] *Ibid.,* 118.

species, and genus."[78] I will analyze only the first of Derrida's four *Geschlecht* essays, the essay that addresses sexuality and the question of Dasein's sexual neutrality.

In *Geschlecht I* Derrida writes, "It is by the name "*Dasein"* that I would here introduce the question of sexual difference."[79] Directing us to Heidegger's lecture material from a Marburg Course on *Dasein*, Derrida notes: 1) Dasein is there; 2) Dasein is neutral and only a bare relation to itself; 3) Dasein is sexually neutral. He then asserts that if Dasein is asexual or sexually neutral, then what is neutralized is not sexuality but a sexual binary or a sexual division. The inference does not logically follow. Derrida operates with the premise that sexual division is more original than sexuality, and more original than sexual neutrality. He writes that origins are characterized by an originary power, and origins are starting points because they are characterized by possibility, by potentiality. In the case of Dasein, Derrida writes, "Neutrality rather leads back to the "power of the origin," which bears within itself the internal possibility of humanity in its concrete facticity."[80] I take Derrida to mean that the origins of humanity has within it the internal possibility of the various ontic expressions, including sexual division; that insofar as there is sexuality or the originary power of sexuality, sexuality is a multiplicity. To have the originary power of any one ontic expression in Dasein is to have the potentiality of that ontic expression. This is problematic because the structure of Dasein is to exist, to be in the world. Existence is the essential character of Dasein; it does not contain existence as a predicate

[78] Patricia Huntington, "Introduction I--General Background: History of the Feminist Reception of Heidegger and a Guide to Heidegger's Thought," in *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 6.

[79] Derrida, "Geschlecht: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference," in *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, Eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 56.

[80] *Ibid.*, 61.

of being, but is the happening of existence. Therefore, predicating existence or sexuality to Dasein is a category mistake.

The "unsaid" is not the same as crossing out, a strikethrough that is sexuality or body. The unsaid is not the same as repressing the not-mentioned through silence. I don't agree with Derrida that Heidegger silenced the body. In fact, he said that the body is a difficult concept, and he felt inadequate in theorizing it. To be silent does not amount to silencing or making silent on a topic. We might remember Wittgenstein's injunction, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."[81] Perhaps this was Heidegger's line of thought for a concept he felt he could not comment on at the time. I point this out strictly to suggest that Heidegger's failure to mention the body might not have been because of bad faith or devaluing the body just because it was not part of his investigation of being in an explicit way. It is in hindsight that we value the body differently and emphasize the place of the body differently than Heidegger did. He was not concerned with corporeality but of fundamental ontology. Derrida wonders if a kind of violence takes place in the neutralizing of Dasein. He writes, "What if sexual difference were already marked in the opening up of the question of the sense of Being and of the ontological difference? And what if, though not self-evident, neutralisation were already a violent operation.[82] The omission of the body as a theme in Heidegger is unfortunate because he could have provided original insight. However, studying Heidegger's fundamental ontology provides tremendous insight into relationality, dwelling, and sociality. All of those things implicitly assume a body and give us something to consider when thinking about everyday experiences.

[81] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* Trans. C.K. Ogden (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1998), 108.

[82] Derrida, 63.

If gender is not a characteristic of Dasein then it would be a category mistake to describe Dasein as gender-neutral, as I asserted above. Asexual is an expression of sexuality, in the form of a negation. It is nonsensical to speak of asexuality without reference to sexuality; sexuality is referred to and negated in the very term asexual. If sexuality is not a defining feature of fundamental ontology, then neither is asexuality or neutral sexuality. There is a similar conundrum for the atheist who necessarily invokes theism as she refers to herself as an atheist. However, in the case of Dasein and gender it is a category mistake to describe Dasein as gender neutral if gender is not a characteristic or predicate of being. Being cannot express, negate, or neutralize a characteristic or predicate that is ontic. Hence, if gender is not a trait of Dasein, it is problematic to call Dasein "gender-neutral," as gender is not a structural characteristic of the existential. Gender is, however, a manner in which beings may project their Being into the future. A being that has Dasein may be gender-specific. Such beings are gender-specific because they are already concerned with themselves, to use Heidegger's language: their own Being is an issue as they live out their being, and living out their being may involve gender-specific modes of expression or practices.

It seems that Derrida finds an opportunity in Heidegger's mention of sexual neutrality, a mention made in passing. Derrida treats the very mention as though it upends other claims and conclusions he draw about Being, especially concerning the ontological difference, as though the very mention of neutrality throws a wrench into the most basic claim that the meaning of Dasein is to be-there. Fundamental ontology for Heidegger is most deeply characterized by being's concern for itself, which shows that we are not indifferent to ourselves.

3.5 Emerging Insights

To say that Dasein is gender neutral is to predicate something of being albeit through a privation or negation and, I think, to misappropriate the philosophical category of Dasein. Gender, even if characterized in terms of neutrality, is an ontic issue, and we remember that the ontological difference is at the heart of Heidegger's argument in *Being and Time.* Beings are ontically and ontologically discursive, and we should be careful not to collapse the interpretation of gender from category into the other. Heidegger was not addressing social discourse or the physicality of the body in ontic terms; he developed an ontological argument, such that discourse is relevant insofar as being-articulated emerges from it, strictly when paying attention to the logic of the argument and whether sexual neutrality can be part of it.

While we can assume a body, what we say about Dasein in light of granting the body is limited to the ontological. So we take great care in navigating the fact/value distinction along with the ontic/ontological distinction. Ontological categories of thought cannot just be assigned sexed or gendered characteristics. But I do think that what we think of sex and gender, of masculine and feminine, as much as we inherit certains forms of thought and experiencing the world, affects how we approach and visualize concepts and objects of analysis. There is no way to set aside one's own worldview; there is no neutral gaze. This is one connection between pursuing metaphysical questions and the way epistemological issues impinge on and shape how questions are formulated and the ways those questions are answered.

My argument about the ontic/ontological distinction strictly has to do with the logic of Heidegger's phenomenological ontology and his depiction of the structures of existence for Dasein. This does not mean that we do not consequently arrive at insights about what it means to

live out our being and to body forth. What we learn about Dasein, dwelling and relationality, illuminates the living out of our being in concrete ontic existence.

Going back to the distinction between *Leib* and *Körper,* the understanding of being directs the experiences I have from within my own body, the lived-body, insofar as I am concerned with my own existence. The concern and awareness that I have for my sexuality, a hurt toe, or the smells of home are ontic, albeit shaped and directed by my ontological constitution. For example, from the Zollikon Seminar on May 14, 1968 Heidegger suggests the following.

> As for phantom limb pains, one must say that they are precisely the testimony for ecstatic bodiliness [*Leiblichkeit*]. My relationship to my toes is a bodily one [*lieben*] and not a corporeal [*körperlich*] one. The feeling of something through my toes was earlier understood as the mere being present-at-hand of the toe. Yet this understanding does not reach far enough. Sensitivity to pain goes beyond my toes.[83]

In commenting about the difference between a bodily experience and observing corporeality, Heidegger is noting the difference between phenomenology and scientific knowledge and objectivity. We can say that phenomenology is pursued in light of ontological meaning, but this is not to confuse what we experience from the phenomenological as identical to the essence of Being, which is to exist in a certain mode. Heidegger notes in a conversation with Menard Boss in 1963 that a phenomenology of the body can only ever be descriptive, not explanatory.

In this chapter I aimed to describe what Heidegger said about the body, even though his comments were limited in scope. In the next chapter, I will analyze bodies and power, drawing from postmodern and poststructuralist writers, to show how being human means being involved in power dynamics about the body and sexuality.

[83] Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars,* 221.

CHAPTER 4:
BODIES AND POWER

4.1 Introduction

We are now familiar with Heidegger's argument that we are beings-in-the-world, and that we exist alongside others (mit-dasein). Ontically, our bodies are situated in a network of relations, and we live within socio-historical and political contexts from the time we are born. It would be shortsighted to write about bodies without also discussing power, sexuality, and gender. This chapter surveys the nature of those relations and the effects they have on a sense of self and identity, especially along the lines of sex and gender. In this chapter, I analyze postmodern and poststructuralist thought and the materiality of bodies. I take a critical look at conceptions of power dynamics and the place of the body in the work of several prominent, mostly contemporary thinkers. In this chapter I will move toward the position that nature and culture are not concretely different spheres of human life but that what happenings in what we regard the sociocultural setting have concrete effects on materiality, such that the dichotomy between the two does not emerge from a natural distinction but from historical assumptions. Setting this thesis within my larger project, I am also arguing that we ought to reject the idea that materialism and idealism are the only options in which to conceive of the bodily aspect of our being, moving toward the significance of the flesh as an under-discussed aspect of our being human.

4.2. Judith Butler on Bodies that Matter

Much of human history assumed that male and female are biologically given forms of sex, that masculine and feminine are the ways gender is expressed along biological delineations, and that heterosexuality is the normal gravitation, along with the desire to procreate and to fulfill gendered obligations in society. Anything else was typically considered an unusual deviation, even perverse and sick. Even after three "waves" of feminism and pushes for sexual inclusivity, studying and attempting to move beyond structural and symbolic sexism in society and the family, a person will still encounter push-back if she suggests that traditional views on sex and gender are not descriptive but prescriptive. What we find in Judith Butler's thought is that naming and naturalizing the identification of male and female conceals normative and prescriptive influences that form those very categories.

This section examines Judith Butler's critical theory about sexuality and subjectivity and looks more closely at the ways society affects the constitution of the self.[84] I will study Butler's argument that sexual difference emerges from a basis in materiality, and to see if this is actually the case. I will consider the implications of her argument that one's social identity does not represent an essential nature of the self, that identity is a manifestation of social categories imposed by external disciplinary mechanisms which themselves lack concretely identifiable points of origin. Butler writes, "For the most part, feminist theory has assumed that there is some existing identity, understood through the category of women, who not only initiates feminist interests and goals within discourse, but constitutes the subject for whom political representation is pursued."[85] I will hone in on her assertion that the self is constantly displaced and deferred; how the category "woman" is no longer a fixed point of reference for feminist theory, that it

[84] Part of Butler's argument is that the subject is affected by but not an effect of socio-political influences.

[85] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1999), 3.

cannot be the referent that it has been for socio-political discourse if the category "woman" is the very idea being contested.

Butler argues that it is crucial to prioritize questioning the conditions of subjectivity and the ways we are represented as social and political subjects, that we make this--a hermeneutic of suspicion--a guiding practice for feminist theory and political engagement. A background premise for this directive is that subjects are constituted in some part through social discourse, that they are constituted differently according to their original situation and by what later ensues in the experience of life. Butler's argument is a response to essentialism, taking from Nietzsche's assertion that there is not subject to speak of prior to action, no "doer behind the deed." Butler adds, "We might state as a corollary: There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results."[86] This is because gender is performative, such that we can draw a distinction between being oneself and becoming.[87]

Butler argues that performativity is not a matter of simply choosing one identity over another; it is a practice that takes place in discourse, enacting and producing that which it also names. What these amounts to is a repetition of norms that instantiate the materiality of sex in line with the so-called Law that governs expressions of sex and gender. This instantiation of matter is the product of what Butler describes as a "process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter."[88] Hence, the

[86] *Ibid.*, 33.

[87] There is a parallel in Alfred North Whitehead's thought, a philosopher who provides tremendous insight into the difference between being and becoming, out of his depiction about the relationship between materiality and sociality, the one and the many, and personal identity that is grounded yet radically open to creative possibilities.

[88] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993), 9.

materiality of bodies is on some level a social/historical/cultural construct, such that the sexed entity conforms to a *normative* ideal. What is assumed in these claims, of course, is that the boundaries of the body and the self are porous and capable of being influenced or directed, to some degree. The body itself, however, is not directly influenced but the psyche, which then affects what happens in the body. This creates a distinction in the person, between the body and the psyche while also affirming that both are aspects of the same subject. For Butler, the body is "the psyche's site of operation," but the materiality of the body is not caused by the psyche even though it is affected by the psyche.[89] Butler writes, "The constitutive demand that mobilizes psychic action from the start, that is that very mobilization, and, in its transmuted and projected bodily form, remains that psyche." In this way, the body is a projected phenomenon for the "I," for the interior self to "exteriorize" itself toward normative sexualities and expressions of gender.

Bodies are interpreted and judged so that some are valued and others are recognized as abject, just in case they do not properly conform to what the hegemonic discourse appreciates. Thus, "matter" is used in a double sense to indicate the materiality of bodies and the mattering (i.e., valuing) of some bodies over others.

Butler takes inspiration from Louis Althusser's concept of "interpellation," which is regarded as hailing, or calling, a person into subjectivity. Butler argues that interpellation occurs through the gendering of infants at birth, in the practice of "hailing" (i.e., announcing) that *it*--the infant--is a boy or a girl. With fetal ultrasound, pronouncing gender now occurs even prior to birth. Infant girls are "girled" by language through the process of naming, as well as in practices that reiterate "girling" norms governed by the law of sex. Butler argues that calling an infant a

[89] *Ibid.,* 67.

boy or a girl is not a descriptive move but is, rather, the setting of boundaries that also operate as constitutive factors of subjectivity.

This idea reaches back to J.L. Austin's speech act theory, in which performative utterances actually perform the act that is uttered or declared. For example, when a couple says "I do" in their wedding vows this is a speech act that performs a change in the status of the couple's relationship and social status; they are considered married upon the performance of the culturally accepted wedding ceremony and the officiating person's pronouncements that marriage has taken place. A speech act, then, does not merely describe something as true or real but makes it so. Butler describes the girling and boying of infants as those very instances of performative pronouncements, so that both sex and gender are not chosen but are forcibly ascribed to the infant and simultaneously naturalized as fact.

Butler argues that the concept of sex is a problem because this idea makes gender appear to be a cultural overlay imposed on the body. She writes, "Gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive /cultural means by which "sexed nature" or "a natural sex" is produced and established as "prediscursive," prior to culture, a politically neutral surface *on which* culture acts." [90] Failing to see this dynamic, sex becomes perceived as an ideal and given aspect of what it means to be human.[91] Butler cites a "regulatory power" overseeing the materialization of bodies through cultural norms, and this regulatory power oversees "sex" just as much as gender. This regulatory power is what drives the process of subjection. Drawing heavily on the thought of Michel Foucault, Butler explains the process of being subjected.

> Juridical notions of power appears to regulate political life in purely negative terms—that is, through the limitation, prohibition, regulation, control, and even 'protection' of

[90] Butler, *Gender Trouble,* 11.

[91] Throughout *Gender Trouble*, Butler maintains a thread about the "racializing of gender norms," as race is also subject to the effects of regulatory power along with normative heterosexuality.

> individuals related to that structure through the contingent and retractable operation of choice. But the subjects regulated by such structures are, by virtue of being subjected to them, formed, defined, and reproduced in accordance with the requirements of those structures. If this analysis is right, then the juridical formation of language and politics that represents women as "the subject" of feminism is itself a discursive formation and effect of a given version of representational politics. And the feminist subject turns out to be discursively constituted by the very political system that is supposed to facilitate its emancipation.[92]

Butler describes a power, an act of policing, that attempts to define the boundaries of knowledge whereby "truth," the objects of knowledge, and categories of discourse are maintained within a phallogocentric paradigm. By demonstrating the ways in which power relations in the socio-political realm define the materiality of the body and subjectivity, Butler leaves one wondering whether feminist practice can be grounded in materiality and especially the materiality of sex. In other words, can I be politically engaged as a woman in this body, if I identify as a woman, if the very concept of "woman" has been destabilized? She responds to this concern by arguing that matter cannot ground feminist theory because it is already "sedimented" within discourses about sex and sexuality, and in this way matter is loaded with assumptions and prescriptions. She reminds that we are not privy to an "original materiality" that is prior to its own history and life in discourse, and we only know the materiality of the body as an effect of discourse. Therefore, Butler concludes that materiality cannot be the ground of feminist practice and theory, but materiality can and must certainly be the object of theory and practice. This is problematic for political activity intending to secure rights and visibility for women or sexual minorities. She does not provide a grounding for political engagement, but, instead, describes a process for moving forward.

Examining the "methods of production" are central to deconstructive investigations. Language and the act of naming others are methods of production that work in apparently neutral

[92] *Ibid*. 4.

and transparent ways. But we find that neutrality is not the case. While language works to enforce norms, it is also a rich resource for subversive acts against dominating forces. Butler argues for "affirmative deconstruction," which involves participation in political discourse while using language to subvert. This is not straightforward, however, as one is implicated within the linguistic system by even naming men and women, by naming anything at all, even when a person attempts to qualify and displace the very language that expounds and protects gendering. This was the case when "white feminism," for example, unknowingly covered over and spoke for the experience of non-white women, not including them or recognizing the radically different life experiences. There is a multiplicity within the very signifier "woman," but this multiplicity is covered over in the signifier's use. Butler explains, "The insistence upon the coherence and unity of the category of women has effectively refused the multiplicity of cultural, social, and political intersections in which the concrete array of "women" are constructed."[93]

Butler affirms a constant creation of norms and categories even as she challenges the primacy of identity as the end of politics altogether. Rather than ceding the end of the struggle as the attainment of a visible identity, Butler argues that it is more important to question the conditions of "sayability, of speakability, and of visibility" while also asserting oneself as a subject in the course of engaging the Law, because there is no subject "before the Law." This is the crucial aspects of the process for political engagement. Butler writes, "In effect, the law produces and then conceals the notions of 'a subject before the law' in order to invoke that discursive formation as a naturalized foundational premise that subsequently legitimates that law's own regulatory hegemony."[94] Working toward social visibility and making appeals to

[93] *Ibid*., 19-20.

[94] *Ibid*., 5.

justice and human rights begins with epistemological questions that takes into account the grounds and justification of belief, unraveling and retiring "truth statements" about the nature of humanity.

Judith Butler provides a feminist account of the cultural and linguistic construction of the body in *Bodies that Matter*. She criticizes and tries to work beyond hierarchized depictions of the gendered subject, theorizing the materiality of the body in relation to culture and language, pushing back against the idea that the body is merely an effect of culture or language. In this way, Butler is beyond Heidegger's distinction between *Leib* and *Körper*; a person's experience of her body and the way she goes about in her body, performatively, is the reality of her body for her, including the "nature" aspect of the physicality of the gendered body. Butler aims to deconstruct essentialism and responds to criticisms that her theories, especially the ideas that emerged from her book *Gender Trouble,* amount to constructivism, and that her account of the body could not have a material basis because of her emphasis on the role of language.[95] She notes that her intention in the book is to revisit "the workings of heterosexual hegemony in the crafting of matters sexual and political" and to give a "critical rearticulation of various theoretical practices, including feminist and queer studies."[96] In *Bodies That Matter*, Butler argues that materialization happens through a performative process as social norms impinge on and define the boundaries between acceptable identities and abject ones.

Even though Butler wrote *Bodies That Matter* in an attempt to respond to criticism about the materiality of the body depicted in *Gender Trouble*, certain problems persist. There is an issue of the opaque nature of the self, of what grounds autonomy and the self, if there is any

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Butler, *Bodies That Matter,* xii.

sense of autonomy that is something other than *a reaction to* power and prescriptions. Butler points to drag as a way to assert oneself in defiance to social norms, to use parody in response to the hegemonic. It creates a system of universal oppression to the Law as well as universal complicity, what amounts to a vague sense of who plays what role within the system.

4.3 Bodily Resistance: Disrupting Order

In this section, I will describe and compare ways to ground politics, to facilitate resistance to hegemonic networks of power, the symbolic, and the "law of sex." Subjectivity is what constitutes a person as a certain kind of person, and factors in analysis of the socio-historical and political contexts that bring a subject into being. Right away we notice that subjectivity is not about detailing a universal experience as much as it identifies the processes and structures that affect a person who exists in a specific subject-position. To be a subject is to be located and oriented in the world, affected by and responding to the world. It makes certain ontological assumptions, that to exist is to be socially embedded and affected by power dynamics. We have surveyed Judith Butler's argument that the materiality of the body and sex is constructed through a reiteration of norms. But we might then wonder if a person can refuse what one is or has become if it is unclear what (or who) one is due to a kind of opacity at the heart of a dynamic identity that is not of her own choosing. This certainly emerges from, directly traceable to, Michel Foucault's contention, "Where sex and pleasure are concerned, power can 'do' nothing but say no to them."[97] Susan Bordo looks at the cultural meaning of the female body and explains how women have resisted patriarchal oppression in and through their body. Slavoj

[97] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: Vol. 1* (New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 1990) 83.

Zizek provides a radical materialist response to my question about if and how a person might push back against the established order of things, in such a way that a novel and unexpected effect happens. In Zizek's reading of "perverse" Christianity, what he calls "the Absolute" becomes fragile and seemingly perverse, such that self-destructive acts of renunciation disrupt the social order, creating space for free action, changing the power coordinates of a situation. In this section I will describe and compare possible ways to respond to power structures in an effort to find a sense of freedom and autonomy in subjectivity.

4.3.1 Foucault on Punishment and Sexuality

Foucault takes a genealogical approach when analyzing power dynamics and human behavior in *Discipline and Punish*, focusing on the practices of incarceration.

> The body is . . . directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs . . . power is not exercised simply as an obligation or prohibition on those who "do not have it"; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them.[98]

He argues that such practices gave rise to the human sciences, what was considered objective analysis of humans and society, and ended up exerting power by threat of punishment. The pervasiveness of these networks of control is wide because it goes beyond the penal system and extends into medical science and practice, as well as the science of psychology. Foucault writes, "The judges of normality are present everywhere."[99] He situates power as a technique that

[98] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, NY: Random House Inc., 1977), 25.

[99] *Ibid.*, 304.

exerts control over the body and knowledge, especially in relation to punishment and sex. Knowledge is connected to power and carceral practices are its techniques for implementation of control. Institutions other than prisons are also used to "reform" instead of punishing directly through isolation, torture, or killing. What we end up with is a disciplinary society that exerts control through its schools, hospitals, and even workplaces by imposing norms, distinguishing between acceptable and deviant behavior, assigning consequences.

Foucault applies his genealogical approach in *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1,* extending the claim that the aims of knowledge and the goals of power cannot be separated in. In this work, he responds to the "repressive hypothesis" and argues that our knowledge of sexuality is entwined with power structures in society, especially as those structures increasingly proliferate. The repressive hypothesis was the idea that a silence had formed around sexuality beginning in the 17th century, a silence that manifested as a prudish avoidance of discussions about sex and secrecy surrounding sexual practices. Foucault counters that what was actually occurring was a "discursive explosion" concerned with sex, even to the point of a cultural obsession. He argues that this more accurately reflects the relationship between sex and power in recent centuries, and that it is reflected in concerns about female hysteria, fetishism, onanism, masturbation, and various "perversions" such as what was then called the "invert." These judgements were also reflected in Catholic confessions concerned with impure thoughts and desires, and the emergence of Freudian psychoanalysis and the libidinal. The medical community weighed in and contributed by establishing boundaries between what was considered normal or of concern, and prescribed treatments upon diagnosis. Foucault writes, "Where sex and pleasure are concerned, power can "do" nothing but say no to them; what it produces, if anything, is absences and gaps; it overlooks elements, introduces discontinuities, separates what is joined, and marks off

boundaries."[100] He called this link between sex and knowledge "bio-power" and, instead of prohibiting sex, was attempting to control and manage it.

There is a parallel between the practices of incarceration in *Discipline and Punish* and the impulse to control sexuality as described in the *History of Sexuality,* Vol. 1, in the way that each creates an object for scientific study and, with the privilege of knowledge, have control and the power to prescribe and dictate norms. The effect that this has on the individual is that norms are internalized and each person begins to self-monitor and live out those norms. While Freud wrote about the importance of exploring the inner depths of a person to learn which kinds of sexual secrets were causing disorders and neuroses, Foucault argued, in contrast, that the notion of sex emerges out of sexuality, which is itself formed historically within *and* against bio-powers. He writes, "The rallying point for the counterattack against the deployment of sexuality ought not to be sex-desire, but bodies and pleasures."[101] Foucault urges in the conclusion of *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* that resistance is possible by removing the "agency of sex" from the grips of powers and knowledges. Doing this, he argues, requires allowing oneself to acknowledge that sex itself is desirable and to actually act on the impulses of this desire: "The desire to have it, to have access to it, to discover it, to liberate it, to articulate it in discourse, to formulate it in truth.[102]

4.3.2 In/Visibility and Docile Bodies

[100] Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*, 83.

[101] *Ibid.*, 157.

[102] *Ibid.*, 156.

Susan Bordo investigates the cultural meaning of the body and argues that women have resisted oppression in and through their body. She argues that patriarchal interests are furthered by naturalizing the intellectual/physical dualism,the man/woman binary, that women are defined by their bodies and deemed more emotional than analytic. According to Elizabeth Grosz, binaries naturalize dualism in such a way that the second term is consistently defined according to the privileged first term. Grosz writes, "Given the prevailing binarized or dichotomized categories governing Western reason and the privilege accorded to one term over the other in binary pairs (e.g., mind over body, culture over nature, self over other, reason over passions) it is necessary to examine the subordinated, negative, or excluded term *body* as the *unacknowledged condition* of the dominant term, *reason.*"[103]The body is held as inferior to reason even as it provides the physical conditions for intellectual activity. Because these distinctions and identifications are naturalized, Bordo argues that women internalize them and resist specific forms of oppression through their body, communicating through their flesh and behavior. This happens, Bordo argues, because bodies are mediums, metaphors, and texts of culture. Bodies are one way to communicate and express oneself, either through fashion, body modification, dieting, and even the posture one acquires that exerts masculine strength or feminine deference and subordination. Drawing from Michel Foucault, she identifies "docile bodies" as those that succumb to cultural "practices of femininity," driving themselves to achieve unrealistic ideals of what being a woman represents. The interesting thing is that when women's resistance is made in the form of exaggerations of the feminine ideal, modeling the epitome of the ideal, does not overcome those ideals as much as it communicates just how unnatural the ideal is.

[103] Grosz, 31-2.

These assertions contain a philosophical and a cultural component. Philosophically, the body is capable of "taking shape," alterable from its original state in response to the influence of one's situation. So, we can ask if such changes are merely in shape or in essence, and to what degree a person enjoys a dynamic nature.[104] With regard to culture, Bordo writes the following.

> Popular culture has its own versions of this thesis, as we alter our bodies without regard for biological consequences, recklessly making them over through yo-yo dieting and plastic surgery and eagerly embracing any technology that challenges our various biological clocks. Arguably, we are more in touch with our bodies than ever before. But at the same time, they have become alienated products, texts of our own creative making, from which we maintain a strange and ironic detachment.[105]

Bordo describes a form of hyper-obedience driving some individuals to pursue these ideals to the point of pathology, what she calls "feminine pathology": compulsive exercising, extreme dieting, attention to minute details of fashion, refusing to leave one's home environment, and exaggerating feminine delicacy in the form of hysteria. These practices emerge from historical ideals and, at their worst, amount to forms of social control. Bordo writes, "In such an era we desperately need an effective *political* discourse about the female body, a discourse adequate to an analysis of the insidious, and often paradoxical, pathways of modern

[104] In an apt description, Elizabeth Grosz points to the volatile nature of bodies. She writes, "Human bodies, indeed all animate bodies, stretch and extend the notion of physicality that dominates the physical sciences, for animate bodies are objects necessarily different from other objects; they are materialities that are uncontainable in physicalist terms alone. If bodies are objects or things, they are like no others, for they are the centres of perspective, insight, reflection, desire, agency [. . .] Bodies are not inert; they function interactively and productively. They act and react. They generate what is new, surprising, unpredictable" (Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), xi.). Bodies are malleable and dynamic, affected by external factors. If the body is volatile then gender and sex are not necessarily opposed or distinct from each other. Grosz describes the body as a historically specific "sociocultural artifact." She believes that an analysis of the body must also be an analysis of sex, that we need to reach for an ontological account of differently sex bodies. Grosz points to the influence of cultural representations of the body and their ability to put sexual difference *onto* bodies *in* the process of subjectivity. Grosz argues, "Alterity is the very possibility and process of embodiment: it conditions but is also a product of the pliability or plasticity of bodies which make them other than themselves, other than their "nature," their functions and identities" (*Ibid*., 209). Indeed, this helps us to understand a central claim of her book, *Volatile Bodies*, which is that the ontological of the body involves socio-cultural elements. What we find in Grosz is that the body's immanence in culture means that it emerges from that order, not that the sociocultural effects merely affect the surface of the body.

[105] Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 288.

social control."[106] Bordo's analysis of resistance and protest by means of pathology builds upon an understanding that such behavior is constraining *and* liberating at the same time. We what know about coping mechanisms is that even ones that are considered unhealthy serve a function. So, a person can accomplish a political act while hurting herself in another way. As we will later see in the section on Zizek, a radical act is one that breaches the system even if a person "shoots himself in the foot" at the same time.

Bordo's analysis of political statements made through the body are gender-specific. Her research concentrates on the current burgeoning of eating disorders in Western society. Obsessive body practices, viewed from within a cultural context, are protests of ideal femininity *and* submission to cultural expectations at the same time. She explains, "Through embodied rather than discursive demonstration she exposes and indicts those ideals, precisely by pursuing them to the point where their destructive potential is revealed for all to see."[107] The body as a site of individual self-determination is one end of a dichotomy in Bordo's analysis. The other end is her insistence that the body is a real material entity embedded within culture, readily constituted for social interaction and taking on cultural expectations.

Foucault distinguishes the "intelligible body" from the "real body." The former refers to bodies that negotiate power in the Symbolic world and the latter refers to bodies that speak and act in the Real world, in the political. Bordo draws on this distinction and believes that too much emphasis has been placed on the Symbolic meaning of bodies and not enough attention has been given to the lived experiences of bodies. The bottom line for Bordo, and the point of relevance

[106] Susan R. Bordo, "The Body and Reproduction of Femininity," in *Gender/Body/Knowledge: Feminist Reconstructions of Being and Knowing*, Alison M. Jaggar and Susan R. Bordo (eds.), (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 14-15.

[107] *Ibid.*, 21.

for this project, is her assertion that philosophy has neglected the physical experience of the body and that more emphasis should be placed on examining the "practical lives of bodies" as sites of struggle.

In Bordo's efforts to *describe* ways that women use their bodies as voices of protest, however, she strengthens the identification of women with the body. She does not reconcile men and bodies or women and reason, but further exacerbates the dichotomy through her explanation of the textual body as having a cultural component, of the physical body as a site of struggle. She writes, "But what remains the constant element throughout historical variation is the *construction* of body as something apart from the true self (whether conceived as soul, mind, spirit, will, creativity, freedom . . .) and as undermining the best efforts of that self."[108] What remains to be said is how bodies that do not identify as female are sites of struggle, as well.

In her effort to trace the body as materially situated in culture, to debunk the mind/body dualism, and to focus on constituted ("real") bodies in opposition to constituting (purely "textual") bodies, Bordo instrumentalizes subjectivity derived from metaphysics of substance, isolating "pathological" femininity as the dynamic force behind female identity. Her focus on materiality is significant, but she reinforces the male/female dichotomy in her analysis of a kind of givenness of the original body.

At one point, she indicates that her goal is not to portray "feminine pathology" as bizarre or anomalous but, rather, that she aims to highlight the "logical (if extreme) manifestations of anxieties and fantasies fostered by our culture,"[109] to do this through analysis that isolates

[108] Susan R. Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body,* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993), 5.

[109] *Ibid.,* 15.

disciplinary practices that subjugate women. She argues that this emphasis on the everyday experiences of women strengthens her philosophical position in direct contrast to Judith Butler's abstract and ahistorical cultural analysis that celebrates resistance to power relations instead of engaging in recuperative aspects of power relations. This effort to be concrete, to pay attention to concrete practices, is hugely important and resists settling into theory when changes are needed "on the ground."

Even as Butler and Bordo both address the question of identity-politics and the possibility of transformative resources available for marginalized subjects, they come to conclusions that are very different, I think, given their different understandings of how a subject comes to be in the world. Butler's emphasis on parody by using drag and Bordo's understanding of pathological practices are similar in that both assert that subjects use resources provided by their given cultures and transform or exaggerate the terms creatively. These two thinkers approach human bodily practices from differing assumptions and proceed from different metaphysical premises, such that their conceptions of subjects embedded within culture and the textual body inscribed by culture entail different meanings of *representation.* Butler identifies the constitution of political identity as simultaneous with the process of constituting individual subjectivity. Bordo does not highlight dynamic materiality and describes the subject as projecting or expressing gender, which is certainly not the same as making a claim about performativity.

Without an account of subject-formation or materiality to ground her argument, it is difficult to say how humans are "embedded" in culture as a textual body. Political practices and transformation of those practices is contingent upon one's conception of subjectivity and the ongoing relationship between the subject and the discursive fabric that forms it. Butler's understanding of parodic behavior is tied to her commitment to expand what is culturally

intelligible in terms of multiplicity and explore that which contributes to, yet restrains, such creative possibilities: the power and influence of discourse. Parody through drag is a corporeal practice that exposes the masculinist Law and psychological aspects of cultural regulations. While parody may not facilitate the complete demise of phallogocentrism, it does further expose the paradigm, transforming it at the same time. The feminine pathologies described by Bordo--eating disorders, hysteria, and so forth--are treated as mental illness. We have to explain how what society regards as mental illness and psychology is fundamentally the subject's bodily indictment of oppressive gender ideals (which is not to exclude the possibility that they are both).

For Butler, the constitution of a subject and the world occur in tandem, such that one is not privileged as primary or primordial. The constituting world and the constituting subject influence and limit each other, which implies the impossibility of positing essential cores for either. Butler writes, "The displacement of a political and discursive origin of gender identity onto a psychological 'core' precludes an analysis of the political constitution of the gendered subject and its fabricated notions about the ineffable interiority of its sex or of its true identity."[110] Honing in on the process that constitutes subjects facilitates a displacement of identity and meaning, such that identity is perpetually open to change, multiplying the force of difference in political space. Bordo's analysis lacks attention to the system as dynamic and changing, which underscores my contention that the background structure of being must be considered.

Bordo argues that pathological behavior is a way for feminine subjects to situate themselves in their "proper" cultural space as embodied subjects and, even more significantly, *as women.* Butler refuses to hedge discourse within such categorical definitions. Terms such as

[110] Butler, *Gender Trouble,* 174.

"woman" are linguistic signifiers that mask a process of inscription, on top of inscriptions that Bordo rightly argues are made directly on the body. For as long as Bordo affirms an absolute dichotomy of man/woman (those dual signifiers) and does not recognize multiplicity on either end of the dichotomy she contributes to reifying such concepts. This is largely due to the giveness of biology within Bordo's thought, the fact that she does not problematize the biological account in her analysis of the body compared to how a thinker such as Butler problematizes the biological body.

4.3.3 Zizek, Radical Materialist

Zizek provides one answer to an issue I raised above about Butler's depiction of the subject and political engagement, my concern that the subject perpetually responds to the Law, becoming a self only as a negative response to the system. Zizek describes the "paradox of the subject" as something that occurs because of a constant lack and continual desire for some norm. He writes:

> There is a subject only in so far as there is some material stain/leftover that *resists* subjectivization, a surplus in which, precisely, the subject *cannot* recognize itself. In other words, the paradox of the subject is that it exists only through its own radical impossibility, through a "bone in the throat" that forever prevents it (the subject) from achieving its full ontological identity.[111]

Working from a Hegelian dialectical framework, Zizek prioritizes the "negative" act, representing the void and the dimension of Otherness, over the "positive" act. The negative act amounts to doing exactly what the system or Law does not expect: fighting the system is a way

[111] Slavoj Zizek, *The Fragile Absolute: Or Why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* (London: Verso, 2008), 25.

of allowing oneself to be imprisoned by it, which is what the system expects, resistance to power. Zizek thinks power is thwarted through "unreserved identification" with the system and following the rules. If the human impulse is to resist mortality, Christianity thwarts the system of death through Jesus' death and resurrection and the subsequent teachings on baptism, that one must die to self--even if symbolically--in order to live again. Zizek writes the following.

> [. . .] In a situation of forced choice, the subject makes the 'crazy' impossible choice of, in a way, *striking at himself,* at what is most precious to himself. This act, far from amounting to a case of impotent aggressivity turned against oneself, rather changes the co-ordinates of the situation in which the subject finds himself: by cutting himself loose from the precious object through whose possession the enemy kept him in check, the subject gains the space of free action. Is not such a gesture of 'striking at oneself' constitutive of subjectivity as such?[112]

Subjectivity must, then, emerge from the Other Space, in order to "uncouple" and separate from the established social order and the ontological constraints of that order. Zizek reminds us that Kierkegaard's religious stage involved the teleological suspension of the ethical, inviting us to recall Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his own son at God's command. Zizek is quick to tell us that finding one's freedom through violence is not restricted to male acts, and he points to Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* to illustrate the feminine corollary. A woman need not cut into herself to find freedom, as the feminine has traditionally been characterized by a woman's willingness to give up her own needs to care for a man's needs. She already cuts into herself by prioritizing a man's needs above her own. Zizek proposes that she can go further in radical action, violently taking what means the most to a man in order to upset the system. Taking from him amounts to shooting oneself in the foot. Sethe murdered her own child to prevent an overseer from putting her child into slave bondage and, in doing so, took from the overseer. That action meant 'taking a shot at herself' at the same time. The powerful element in

[112] *Ibid.,* 140.

Beloved was Sethe refusal to explain away or minimize the ethical import of what she said. Instead, she characterized her own act as monstrous and unethical, and yet necessary. Zizek's point in using these kinds of examples was to illustrate how going radically beyond what the system expects also upsets the order of things.

The Fragile Absolute is a materialist defense of Christianity's perversely atheistic core and aims to expound the conditions for subjectivity, as Zizek is concerned with a universal emancipation of the politicized subject, especially in his critique of global capitalism. He connects the notion of *agape* with Marxist and Lacanian insight, arguing that the legacy of *agape* is a useful Christian teaching, one that could rescue Communism from capitalism's "radical impossibility." He writes that capitalism digs itself into crises of contradictions created by surplus value, and that Communism's mistake involved attempting to retain the level of productivity found in capitalism while at the same time freeing itself from the different crises. In other words, Communism could not maintain high levels of productivity without altering economic structures of desire and enjoyment. Zizek writes the following.

> The task of today's thought is thus double: on the one hand, how to *repeat* the Marxist 'critique of political economy' without the utopian-ideological notion of Communism as its inherent standard; on the other, how to imagine actually breaking out of the capitalist horizon *without* falling into the trap of returning to the eminently *premodern* notion of a balanced, (self-)restrained society.[113]

Zizek holds onto "radical impossibility" by shifting to Christianity. He claims that there is a "direct lineage from Christianity to Marxism" and points to the "authentic Christian legacy" of *agape* love in Paul's analysis of the relationship between law and transgression in Romans 7, where Pauline theology attempts to move beyond the structure of law and transgression. Zizek finds a strong resemblance between psychoanalytic theory's model of self-transformation and

[113] *Ibid.*, 16.

writes, “While it is easy to enjoy acting in an egoistic way against one’s duty, it is, perhaps, only as the result of psychoanalytic treatment that one can acquire the capacity to enjoy doing one’s duty.”[114] *Agape* makes it possible for one to fulfill the requirements of the law without the burden or fear of transgressing the law (faith/works distinction). *Agape,* Zizek urges, helps us to “liberate [ourselves] from the grip of existing social reality” by “renounce[ing] the transgressive fantasmic supplement that attaches us to it.”[115] Zizek proclaims that hate is the new love because it is a self-destructive act of renunciation that disrupts the social order, creates space for free action, changes the coordinates of a situation, and saves what is sacrificed from a worse fate.

Zizek aims to displace the gap between essence and appearance and to locate the gap itself *in* the essence of a thing. In Zizek’s reading of perverse Christianity, the Absolute becomes fragile. One might recall that Kierkegaard pointed to the paradox of God becoming fragile on the cross and how this notion ought to confound any rational intellect. In a slightly different sense, Christianity can be regarded as atheistic in virtue of its belief that God died on the cross. For Zizek, there is nothing beyond the appearance of fragility, and this must be read from the Hegelian lens as dialectic. The Absolute is fragile because Christianity inherently involves atheism, especially if one thinks in terms of the prerequisite of falsifying belief in order to further warrant holding that belief. In other words, Christianity is relevant only if it can imagine its negation. Only an atheism that can imagine its negation by religious means can be prevented from becoming an oppressive social institution.

> When we abandon the fantasmatic Otherness which makes life in constrained social reality bearable, we catch a glimpse of Another Space which can no longer be dismissed as a fantasmatic supplement to reality,” writes Zizek (*Ibid.*). In other words, it is because the fantasmatic Otherness is an inseparable part of the Real that there is no gap between essence and appearance. Zizek again points to the crucifixion and provides two

[114] *Ibid., 141.*

[115] *Ibid., 149.*

> interpretations of it: either God is omnipotent and playing games with humans or God is like Abraham and sacrifices his only son to show that his power lies not within omnipotence but in vulnerability. He concludes that the paradox of another order is part of *this* order, and the death of Christ represents "a gesture of 'shooting at oneself,' renouncing what is most precious to oneself.[116]

Zizek describes three modalities of ghosts throughout *The Fragile Absolute.* The first modality of ghosts is the past, located in fundamentalism and traditional religion. The second modality is the "spectral ghost of the capitalist present." The Holy Ghost is the third modality. This ghost is one and the same as the specter of communism in the spirit that resists capitalism. The Holy Ghost was sent to the people after the death of God on the cross, the same specter that moved the fledgling Christian community to resist the social order of its day. Instead of the continuous cycle of the law and transgression, Pauline theology urged the people in that community to cultivate agape love. The community of love and egalitarianism stands in stark contrast with capitalism. The Holy Ghost and the specter of communism are an extension of the same impulse, which is the negative act—the antithesis and the fragile absolute—in the dialectic. This fragile absolute is the dimension of Otherness. Zizek writes:

> It should thus be clear how the standard notion of artistic beauty as a Utopian false escape from the constraints of reality falls short: one should distinguish between ordinary escapism and this dimension of Otherness, this magic moment when *the Absolute* appears *in* all its fragility: the man who puts on the records in the prison (Tim Robbins) is precisely the one who rejects all false dreams about escaping from prison, about life Outside . . . In hearing this aria from *Figaro*, the prisoners have seen a ghost—neither the resuscitated obscene ghost of the past, not the spectral ghost of the capitalist present, but the brief apparition of a future Utopian Otherness to which every authentic revolutionary stance should cling.[117]

We can see that Zizek prioritizes the negative over the positive as the way toward a new establishment and harmony. The negative gesture is the void and the positive gesture attempts to

[116] *Ibid.,* 147.

[117] *Ibid.,* 150.

fill the void with a Truth-Event. The "bone in the throat," quoted above, points to a constant lack and a continual desire for something more. Something seems to prevent the subject's full realization. So, the "paradox of the subject" is that it never achieves its full ontological identity. Subjectivity must emerge from the Other Space in order for the community to "uncouple" and separate from the social order, established religion, dictates surrounding sex and practices, and the ontological structure of that order.

4.3.4 Recapitulation on Bodily Resistance

Butler's use of performativity to describe the gendering of the body was influenced by Michel Foucault's understanding of the productive force of power, along with the idea that subjectivity is a process immersed in and facilitated by discourse, such that discourse on sexuality simultaneously constitutes the body. Foucault distinguishes between the negative force of the Law as well as the positive ways that force can be harnessed, arguing that power functions to repress in some instances and is able to produce in other instances.

Foucault was pessimistic on the possibility of resisting the power of the Law within *Discipline and Punish,* eventually shifting in his later works to argue that resistance to power is possible. Foucault understands the Law to operate externally to desire, and yet also argues that desire forms under Law. In this way, one's internal desire for the self is outside of the Law and yet influenced by the Law. While there is some distance, it still remains to be seen how and why the Law affects a person in some instances and not at other times. For Foucault, if desire is formed under the law and desire is a fundamental drive for the self, how does one resist what one is? In other words, when does autonomy kick in and when does the self lack resistance to

external influences? Butler attempted to move beyond this problem by creating space for psychoanalysis to interpret the law.

> The agency denoted by the performativity of "sex" will be directly counter to any notion of a voluntarist subject who exists quite apart from the regulatory norms which she/he opposes. The paradox of subjectivation (*assujetissement*) is precisely that the subject who would resist such norms is itself enabled, if not produced, by such norms. Although this constitutive constraint does not foreclose the possibility of agency, it does locate agency as a reiterative or rearticulatory practice, immanent to power, and not a relation of external opposition to power.[118]

The performative principle allows for the subversion of fixed notions of identity. If, as Butler argues, the materiality of the body and of sex is constructed through the reiteration of norms, how can a person refuse what one is if there is a kind of opacity at the heart of identity?

Butler, Foucault, and Zizek each offer a call to resist power structures in a way that affects subjectivity. We see in their thought that subjectivity emerges only within a social context and in relation to political structures. Insofar as one is being-in-the-world, one also socialized and set within the political. This has an effect on the body, and what the body experiences affects a person's sense of identity. Subjectivity also emerges through subversive acts. As the analysis of Bordo's work demonstrated, we have to question and deconstruct categories of thought and see whether the very terms of analysis reinforce essentialism and phallogocentric thought. Zizek's thought is radical in that he proposes using the master's tools to dismantle the master's house, so to speak, to upset the status quo. This was evident, in fact, in a controversial video that circulated in the weeks prior to the 2016 presidential election in the United States. In an interview, Zizek drew from his argument in *The Fragile Absolute* and made the case for a Trump presidency as the antithetical "negative" that would certainly upset the existing political structure. This very

[118] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 15.

well might be an instance in which perversion leads to subversion of the social order. Yet, there is no guarantee that what emerges next is beneficial or better.

4.4 Entanglement of Matter

How do thinkers theorize the materiality of the body in relation to cultural constructions, the symbolic domain, and the effects of language and discourse? I looked carefully at Judith Butler's account earlier in this chapter. Karen Barad argues that humans themselves are produced by nature, providing a materialist critique of what she perceives as overly human-centered performative approaches to the body.

We finally move into the work of Karen Barad and will consider a material-discursive account, to see how Barad applies theories of quantum indeterminacy to her work at the intersection of science studies, philosophy, and ethics. She argues that agency and the way humans are depicted in relation to the material world are themselves affected--these depictions--by entanglement, as in, the entanglement of quantum mechanics. Going beyond the relationship between particles, Barad describes the "inescapable entanglement of matters of being, knowing, and doing, of ontology, epistemology, and ethics, of fact and value."[119] She develops an ethico-onto-epistemology called "agential realism" and argues that phenomena, what Barad considers the entanglement of agents and entities, materialize through a process called "intra-action," which is "the *mutual constitution* of entangled agencies."[120] One reviewer of Barad's work noted the following.

[119] Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 3.

[120] *Ibid.,* 33. Emphasis mine.

> Her major point is that we as humans are not outside observers of the world, but we are part of the world in its ongoing intra-activity. Ontology and epistemology cannot be separated; she advocates a form of "onto-epistemology"—the study of practices of knowing in being—in order to come to understand which specific intra-actions matter."[121]

Agential realism looks at how differences are stabilized and destabilized, how they come together and dissolve by looking at the process and effects of materialization instead of starting with a set of differences or properties of a given subject. We can see that this is in contrast to the Cartesian epistemology that assumes an intrinsic and lasting distinction between subject and object.

> According to my agential-realist account, matter is not mere stuff, an inanimate given-ness. Rather, matter is substance in its iterative intra-active becoming—not a thing, but a doing, a congealing of agency. It is morphologically active, responsive, generative, and articulate. Mattering is the ongoing intra-active differentiating of the world. Intra-actions enact agential cuts, which are a cutting together-apart (that is, entangling-differentiating), as one move (not sequential acts). That may seem paradoxical, but it goes to the very nature of the agential cut, which cross-cuts itself. That is, it cross-cuts not only the notion of "itself" but even the notion of the cut itself.[122]

Matter materializes through intra-actions, and Barad ties this to the sense of mattering or meaning.

The nature/culture dichotomy gives rise to hierarchized dichotomies, such as were discussed in sections above. This dichotomy depends on a certain understanding of nature, a notion that is problematized by entanglement and intra-action by recognizing that the very "ground" of nature is unstable. The very divide between nature and culture is unstable, and Barad believes we will learn more about materiality if we are open to the destabilizing of the

[121] Trevor Pinch, "Karen Barad, Quantum Mechanics, and the Paradox of Mutual Exclusivity," *Social Studies of Science,* Vol. 41, No. 3 (2011), 438.

[122] Adam Kleinman, "Intra-actions: An Interview with Karen Barad," *Mousse Magazine,* Vol. 34 (Summer 2012), 80.

grounds of grounds and unsettling theories. The point is to trouble the boundaries and be open to an abyss of possibilities and indeterminacy.

Barad urges the importance of bringing diverse theories together in what she calls a "diffractive" approach. Diffraction is a phenomenon in which waves spread around objects. In the case of light, the light waves bend around an obstacle. In a much simpler example, for the sake of understanding the diffraction pattern, ocean waves diffract when they encounter an obstacle, such as a rock jutting out from the water. The waves are forced to go around the object; the object is the diffractive apparatus. Light waves and sound waves diffract, and the pattern that occurs during diffraction is caused by the superposition, or interference, of waves. In classical physics, it was understood that waves produce diffraction but particles do not. Diffraction experiments are used in the debates surrounding the "wave versus particle" conversations, and the results cannot be explained through classical physics. One experiment that contributed to the emergence of quantum theory was the two-slit diffraction experiment, stunning scientists because it demonstrated, counterintuitively, that given the right circumstances *matter* will create a diffraction pattern: an unexpected diffractive apparatus caused a superposition of the particles of matter. Other experiments have since shown that light will behave like particles of matter under the right circumstances. The results of those experiments shifted physics and our assumptions about the behavior of matter, even how particles may influence each other when not in the expected physical proximity to have any anticipated effect. With the "wave-particle duality paradox" in mind, Barad explains the importance of diffraction experiments.

> While it is true that diffraction apparatuses measure the effects of difference, even more profoundly they highlight, exhibit, and make evident the entangled structure of the changing and contingent ontology of the world, including the ontology of knowing. In fact, diffraction not only brings the reality of entanglements to light, it is itself an entangled phenomenon.[123]

[123] Barad, 73.

The behavior of diffractive phenomena and its use in science shows us that the phenomena can either be the object under study or the "apparatus of investigation," but it cannot be both at the same time. What matters here is the way in which the apparatuses of measurement are used and regarded, how they are approached. The questions and assumptions a person brings to the experiment and the use of the apparatus shape the outcome of the experiment by introducing inherent constraints to the inquiry.

Barad asserts a concern over the relationship between the measuring instrument and the thing being measured, how that relationship is conceived, because there can be a "disturbance" between the two. She draws from Leila Fernandes' theory of the political economy of apparatuses to argue that what is considered an apparatus and the boundaries of the apparatus are not easily delineated, as bodies and entities and material practices are inseparable from power and knowledge. What this demonstrates is the very real power behind scientific investigations to confirm or deny what we know or think we know about the world, nature, and what it means to be human. Experiments are never carried out in a vacuum, and the scientist herself is not typically acknowledged as a factor that shapes the results of the experiment or research. Barad points to reflexivity as a practice that will integrate the scientist and researchers as causal agents in the process of experimenting, affecting the outcome of the experiment.

> Reflexivity is a proposed critical scholarly practice that aims to reflect on, and systematically take account of, the investigator's role as an instrument in the constitution of evidence. Reflexivity aims to acknowledge the tripartite arrangement between objects, representations, and knowers that produces knowledge, as opposed to less-reflexive modes of investigation that leave the knower out of the equation, focusing attention narrowly on the relationship between objects and their representations.[124]

[124] *Ibid.,* 86.

As I respond to the question "what is the body?" and explore the relationship between the work of art and the body, I am increasingly encouraged by the possibility of a metaphysics that adequately responds to the concerns and interpretations of reality described by philosophers *and* scientists, since both attend to the question of materiality. Philosophers and scientists predominately deal with materiality by asking what it is, wondering how it is that we know what it is and how best to observe it. There is an experience of materiality that is not objective but subjective, the lived-body experience of being within and of materiality. Barad will argue that culture has an impact on nature, that we experience as social and cultural beings, which is a kind of subjective experience affects the "brute" nature of the body.

Niels Bohr is one scientist whose philosophy-physics inspired the work of Karen Barad. Bohr's opinion was that quantum physics brought Cartesian epistemology into question, that "quantum wholeness" disrupted the representational concept of language and the character and outcome of the observational process. Barad and the contemporary work of the New Materialists is inspired by shifts prompted by the Theory of General Relativity and quantum physics. Specifically, thinkers like Barad pay attention to how observed activity at the subatomic level calls into question the fixity of identity, that reality is fundamentally background independent. In other words, the physical and metaphysical consequences for spacetime as the "background" of everything that occurs in nature means that the system is characterized by an openness, a non-essentialism, that we could not have arrived through Newtonian physics.

Concerning the nature/culture dichotomy, Barad argues that humans are produced by nature and focuses on bodies to make this point. She provides a materialist critique of Butler's anthropocentric performative depiction of the body. Barad elaborates on this point in an article on "Post-humanist Performativity."

> A crucial part of the performative account that I have proposed is a rethinking of the notions of discursive practices and material phenomena and the relationship between them. On an agential realist account, discursive practices are not human-based activities but rather specific material (re)configurations of the world through which local determinations of boundaries, properties, and meanings are differentially enacted. And matter is not a fixed essence; rather, matter is substance in its intra-active becoming—not a thing but a doing, a congealing of agency. And performativity is not understood as iterative citationality (Butler) but rather iterative intra-activity.[125]

For Barad, matter exists only in mattering, which very much reflects Heidegger's assertion that being is an event, a happening, that is concerned with its own being.

4.5 Emerging Insights

In this chapter, I aimed to connect postmodern and poststructuralist thought to the materiality of bodies. This aim connects with my larger project's proposal that we ought to reject the idea that materialism and idealism are the only two options in which to conceive of the bodily aspect of our being, moving toward the significance of the flesh as an under-discussed aspect of our being human.[126] Materialism can be understood in different ways, and the meaning of materiality often depends on the background of the person using the term or discussing material issues. A scientist like Barad is able to discuss materiality in the language of molecules, atoms, and bodies. She is also able to discuss the dynamic character of materiality and conclude that there are aspects of it that cannot be objectified or put under the microscope, only experienced or observed as a dynamic process. In my larger project, I will argue that flesh has

[125] Karen Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* Vol. 28, No. 3 (2003), 828.

[126] As Barad suggests, "What is needed is a reassessment of physical and metaphysical notions that explicitly or implicitly rely on old ideas about the physical world--that is, we need a reassessment of these notions in terms of the best physical theories we currently have. And likewise we need to bring our best social and political theories to bear in reassessing how we understand social phenomena, including the material practices through which we divide the world into the categories of "social" and the "natural. *Ibid.,* 24-5.

this quality. Describing the experience of flesh can use the language of the materiality of my being while overlapping with phenomenological descriptions of my lived-body. Flesh goes beyond the duality of materialism and idealism, and we find that dualities function as a mode of explanation, a mode of orienting ourselves between issues. But they do not have to be constraints for thought. In the next chapter, I will more fully flesh out this aspect of human experience.

CHAPTER 5:
HEIDEGGER'S PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF SPACE AND SPATIALITY

"The surrounding world is different in a certain way for each of us, and notwithstanding that we move about in a common world." - Martin Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*

"A work of art is situated in space. But it will not do to say it simply exists in space: a work of art treats space according to its own needs, defines space, and even creates such space as may be necessary to it." - Henri Focillon, *The Life in Forms of Art*

5.1 Introduction

We learn about the issue of space and world as we come to understand what it means to be *in* the world, of being-in, from Heidegger's account of Dasein. We have to remember that Heidegger is not characterizing Dasein as *contained* within a world, as spatiality in an existential sense is about orientation and place, not concerning the sense of ontic location or extension. We will find that space is secondary and derivative of the concept of time in Heidegger's *Being and Time*, and also derivative of concepts like being-in and world. Heidegger's "turn" involved shifts in how he thought of spatiality, and part of this was influenced by his study of Hölderlin in the 1930s. Spatiality also figures prominently in Heidegger's later thought, and this chapter will look into some of his later essays.

We cannot think world without also thinking space, as Kant very well knew. The first part of this chapter will involve an analysis of the ways space has been depicted in philosophy, with special attention to Kant. In Heidegger's study of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he pointed

out Kant's use of the ontological distinction and paid attention to the role of time and space.[127] Kant will help me to explore the empirical reality of space and the ontological and ontic lenses through which space is analyzed.

As I noted in earlier chapters, Heidegger distinguished between the body and the lived-body at Le Thor seminar. The physical body, the one that is objectified and studied, is situated within space. The lived-body, on the other hand, experiences spatiality. But we cannot say that the body resolves the issue of spatiality, or that spatiality resolves the issue of knowing what the body really is. We learn about one when we study the other. Studying the body in light of space helps to see what a limit is, that it is not a boundary as much as a horizon or beginning. Studying space also helps to see the interrelationality of entities and bodies in a given region, the ways they affect each other and are affected by the productive aspect of space.

This chapter will show that the production of space includes the perceived, conceived, and the lived insofar as one dwells. The first half of the chapter will analyze Heidegger's thinking on spatiality alongside Kant's *a priori* depiction of space and time, to see what can be said about nature and materiality given the ontic and ontological distinctions of space. The second half of this chapter will assess space and spatiality as the concepts developed in Heidegger's writings.

5.2 The Spatializing of Space

Kant's argument about time and space emerged from what is regarded as an epistemological project. Heidegger stood against the tradition when he argued that the *Critique* is

[127] Martin Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason,* Trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997).

really a theory of transcendental philosophy and ontological knowledge, not an epistemology about the ontic. "What was for Kant the examination of the transcendental possibility of experience, becomes in Heidegger's terms an examination of the ontological possibility of the ontic," suggests Stuart Elden.[128] Kant's theory of knowledge brings into question the very possibility of ontology and lays a foundation for doing metaphysics.

For Heidegger, philosophy's concern for the question of ground and foundation is the same as the question of being. He wrote, "Philosophy has always and constantly asked about the ground of beings. With this question it had its inception, in this question it will find its end, provided that it comes to an end in greatness and not in a powerless decline."[129] Jeff Malpas points to Heidegger's lecture, *The Principle of Reason,* to remind us that the German word *Grund* means both reason and ground. Malpas writes the following.

> Heidegger saw the question of ground as the determining question of philosophy--and in this respect the question of ground is one with the question of being--yet he also saw philosophy as persistently misunderstanding and covering over the true nature of this question or, at least, of what this question contains within it. In this respect, the "forgetfulness of being"--*Seinsvergenssenheir*--that, according to Heidegger, characterizes the history of philosophy, cannot be separated from philosophy's misunderstanding of the question of ground.[130]

Kant's transcendental project influenced Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, which consequently influenced Heidegger to seek the conditions of possibility for existence and the meaning of being in *Being and Time.* The connection between the named thinkers is in their shared aim concerning the philosophical importance of ground and the use of the transcendental

[128] Stuart Elden, *Mapping the Present: Heidegger, Foucault and the Project of a Spatial History* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2001), 22.

[129] Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics,* Trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 26

[130] Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place: Explorations in the Topology of Being* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2012), 73.

as a method. Pointing to Leibniz, Heidegger asserts that everything appears to have a "why," a sufficient reason for why it is. Sufficient reason moves us to look for a ground, and in doing that we tend to look for a cause. More recently, philosophy looks for causes that are physical and material. The problem, Heidegger points out, is that we look for the ground among beings instead of Being. Philosophy has looked for the ground in the ontic instead of the ontological, studying that which is grounded instead of looking that which grounds. In one sense it is understandable to look at beings when questioning the ground, to look at the thing itself when asking what it is. This is not the same as asking why it is. The ontological difference is also the difference between asking what and why. Being, as that which grounds, cannot be questioned because it is the answer to the question. Heidegger writes, "Insofar as being 'is' what grounds, and only insofar as it is so, it has no ground/reason."[131] Heidegger, we know, looked into the meaning of being, what it means to be human, from the lens of phenomenology and ontology. Heidegger's project shifted away from the subject and sought to overcome metaphysics, attempting philosophy in ways that were directly and intentionally different from Kant's methods and aims. There are parallels, however. Kant pursued the ground of knowledge through his transcendental project. The question of whether Kant was an empirical realist or transcendental idealist with regard to space and time is significant because it helps to clarify in what sense humans perceive objects and, for the purposes of this chapter, to see how philosophy has treated the concept space. An exploration into these questions with respect to space and time illuminates the discursive nature of knowledge and of the mind of the knower who is, in some sense, conditioned to represent the world as more than figments of the private imagination. Kant is an

[131] Martin Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, Trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 111.

empirical realist and a transcendental idealist with respect to space and time, insofar as both terms are understood as *a priori* forms of intuition.[132] As forms of intuition, space and time are the means by which cognition immediately *relates to* objects and, of space and time as properties of the mind, are opposed to conceptions of space and time as properties of objects.

The temporal structure emerges from the human standpoint in Kant and Heidegger's philosophies. Both thinkers, Kant and Heidegger, provide arguments about the *a priori* nature of space and time. Heidegger was not restricted to transcendental descriptions of space and time, however, as, in fact, he distinguished between ontological and ontic experiences of space. Judgments about the nature or materiality of the world depend on the structure of the understanding, of the entity experiencing those things. The core of Kant's *a priority* of space and time figures into Heidegger's account of Dasein's temporality and spatiality, especially in that the temporal and spatial structure of objects and things depends on the human standpoint. We have Heidegger's claim that time "temporalizes itself."

> There was a time when there were no human beings. But strictly speaking, we cannot say there was a time when there were no human beings. At every time, there were and are and will be human beings, because time temporalizes itself only as long as there are human beings. There is no time in which there were no human beings, not because there are human beings from all eternity and for all eternity, but because time is not eternity, and time always temporalizes itself only at one time, as human, historical Dasein.[133]

But does space "spatialize itself?" We see that space spatializes itself in at least one sense, insofar as Heidegger's phenomenology was concerned with how things manifest themselves to us, we can assert that to spatialize space is to bring a spatial structure to a being's

[132] The question about Kant's empirical realism and transcendental idealism allows us to explore the kind of knowledge humans are able to have, the status of knowledge, whether the human mind can grasp objects-in-themselves or if knowledge is limited to representations of objects.

[133] Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 64.

awareness. Space is not found outside of Dasein but is made manifest to Dasein as humans find themselves already in the world. However, the world is also an originary space in which we orient ourselves and differentiate from others. So the *a priori* status of space in Kant has a parallel in Heidegger's ontological depiction of being-in-the-world, which we have described elsewhere as the status of space being dependent on and derivative of other concepts. But we see that Heidegger's depiction of being can only be read as a system, of a mutually recursive relationship between the different aspects of Dasein's ontology.

5.3 Metaphysical Distinctions in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*

Kant's transcendental doctrine of elements is divided into the principles of pure thought (transcendental logic) and the principles of sensibility (transcendental aesthetic). The latter, the transcendental aesthetic, aims to accomplish two things: to show that space and time are transcendentally ideal conditions of pure intuition for the possibility of experience and, secondly, to show that it is absolutely certain that space and time are transcendentally ideal. Intuition is the way our cognition immediately relates to objects, directed to objects as an end. Empirical intuition is everything other than what the understanding contributes. Pure intuition involves space and time, the a priori of "sense" that does not involve sensation.

Kant's view of space and time claimed empirical reality and transcendental ideality. This is because space and time are ideal with regard to intuition, insofar as space and time are the form of intuition. But space and time are also real with regard to appearances, as space and time are the matter of intuition. Space and time are "sensible" conditions of sensory experience. Metaphysical expositions show that space and time are a priori and necessary for representation.

Transcendental exposition, on the other hand, regard space and time as the ground for synthetic a priori knowledge, as they establish a universal applicable for space and time intuitions. Epistemology is, of course, concerned with necessity and universality, and Kant aims to show how experience can in the form of sense representations of objects does involve some a priori origins of concepts, some way to make universal and necessary claims about what is represented. Kant's answer was to develop the synthetic a priori judgment, a class of judgments that is not purely conceptual or purely experiential, and yet grounded somehow in the necessary and universal. An analytic statement is true strictly because it conforms to logical laws. Synthetic judgments are true insofar as they are based on an intuition. Mathematics and geometry, for example, are synthetic a priori. Mathematical propositions conform to logical laws of numbers, but the relationship between numbers is understood only insofar as quantity has been intuited and experienced. The relationship between lines conforms to logical laws, but lines and the relationship between them can be understood only through synthetic propositions, insofar as a person has intuitions of extension and quantity.

Empirical Realism accepts that objects are independent of the mind. Kant asserts two modes of exposition in his analysis of space and time. The metaphysical exposition pertains to concepts that are *a priori* and non-empirical in origin. The transcendental exposition refers to human intuition of space and time that are sensible in origin and, in other words, derived in *a priori* synthetic manner. At first glance, it might appear contradictory to hold that space and time are both *a priori* (necessary and universal) and sensible (contingent and particular). However, they are *a priori* in the metaphysical exposition and *a priori* synthetic in the transcendental exposition. Kant writes, "For this purpose [the explanation of a concept] it is required (1) that such knowledge [*a priori* synthetic knowledge] does really flow from the given concept, (2) that

this knowledge is possible only on the assumption of a given mode of explaining the concept [by a transcendental exposition].[134] This short passage is the basis for determining whether Kant was an empirical realist, transcendental idealist, or both. In short, Kant is a realist at the empirical level because he offers the certainty of knowledge even while holding that space and time are subjective forms in the mind. What this amounts to, we will discover, is knowledge of appearances albeit not knowledge of objects-in-themselves, as will be explained.

Kant's account of empirical realism is that knowledge of the world and objects is drawn from experience. However, the requirements for cognition, which he describes as intuitions, the conditions of space and time, are prior to and anticipate experience. This assertion could be interpreted in at least three ways. Does Kant mean that the world and objects are *constructed* by human cognition? In this case, appearances are primary, and each mind constructs its own world comprised of appearances. Nothing else exists. Or, does Kant mean that the world *corresponds* to human cognition? In this case, objects and the world that correspond to human perception do exist on their own, even if not perceived by the human mind. Correspondence would be direct and identical. A third possibility is the one I think Kant is arguing, and it is similar to the first in that the mind has appearances of objects and the world based on forms of intuition provided by experience. However, the appearance of objects, "as objects of our senses," is not identical to objects-in-themselves since objects always conform to the mind, as Kant indicates when speaking specifically of time.

> If we abstract from *our* mode of inwardly intuiting ourselves—the mode of intuition in terms of which we likewise take up into our faculty of representation all outer intuitions—and so take objects as they may be in themselves, then time is nothing. It has objective validity only in respect of appearances, these being things which take *as objects of our senses.* It is not longer objective, if we abstract from the sensibility of our intuition,

[134] Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason,* Trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 70.

> that is, from that mode of representation which is peculiar to us, and speak of *things in general.*[135]

Hence, it is not the case that objects-in-themselves cease to exist when one is no longer perceiving them. Kant believes the nature of objects as they are in themselves is unknowable to us, that the knowledge of appearances is nevertheless possible. Why is this the case?

It is the nature of objects-as-representations, or concepts, that they go through a process of intuition. This is where the primary question of space and time enters the picture. The case of space and time has to do with these terms being forms of intuition. What matters for the purposes of this study is the claim that space and time are empirically real, just as Kant asserts. Of course, we want to know exactly what the reality of those intuitions entails.

The significance of this is the parallel between Kant's line of argument for the synthetic a priori and Heidegger's discussion of the ontic/ontological difference. Stuart Elden points out the following.

> Synthetic *a priori* knowledge is possible on the basis of the original synthetic unity of the pure productive power of imagination, on the basis of temporality. As temporality is the basic constitution of human Dasein, humans have the possibility of having a pure understanding of being. The understanding of being in general (ontological knowledge) is possible on the basis of the temporality of Dasein.[136]

Heidegger was searching for the meaning of being and Kant was trying to find a foundation for knowledge, asking how *a priori* knowledge was possible. Heidegger wanted to know if ontological knowledge could be grasped and what its structure of meaning is. Both thinkers answered their questions with some basis in temporality. Heidegger responded that temporality was the means to understand being. Kant's answer to the question of how experience

[135] *Ibid.*, 77.

[136] Elden, 23.

and reason are joined in synthetic a priori knowledge was to point to the imagination, which was itself based in temporality.

Transcendental idealism denies that objects are *absolutely* independent of the mind. Do space and time have an independent existence outside of their intuitive role in the mind? Kant offers several descriptions of the formative role of space and time in his metaphysical exposition. He emphasizes that they are intuitions and do not have an absolute reality of their own outside of the mind.

> On the other hand, we deny to time all claim to absolute reality; that is to say, we deny that it belongs to things absolutely, as their condition or property, independently of any reference to the form of our sensible intuition; properties that belong to things in themselves can never be given to us through the senses. This, then, is what constitutes the *transcendental ideality* of time.[137]

Even though the conditions of human sensibility are universal, they are not meaningful beyond the domain of the mind. As suggested by C.M. Walsh, "Distinct also are their [sense-objects] space, their times, their consciousness, their experiences, their phenomenal worlds."[138] In other words, the conditions for having representations and the process of sensing one's surroundings are not unique. But the representations themselves are distinct and private.

In one sense, there is a unity of experience among humans because of the conditions and process of intuition and sensation. Kant frequently speaks as though there is only one time and one space, an issue that illustrates the difference between empirical reality and transcendental ideality of space and time. He writes, “Space is represented as an infinite *given* magnitude.”[139] He also writes, “The infinitude of time signifies nothing more than that every determinate

[137] *Ibid.,* 78.

[138] C.M. Walsh, “Kant’s Transcendental Idealism and Empirical Realism,” *Mind* Vol. 12 No. 48 (Oct., 1903), 463.

[139] Kant, 69.

magnitude of time is possible only through limitations of one single time that underlies it."[140] Upon close examination of Kant's thought, we find that time and space are not measurable or quantifiable; they exist as modes of experience for the sake of finding orientation and establishing proximity from others, and they "exist" in the mind as forms for intuition.

Representations, however, are also more than aspects of the imagination. Kant argues that space is an intuition and it is not discursive. But concepts and the process of acquiring knowledge is discursive. Space and time are modes of intuition that enable objects to conform to the mind, and these forms are what cause sensations to conform to the mind after having been acquired by experiencing the surrounding world, an experience that subsequently produces representations. However, these representations do not give us things-in-themselves. Otherwise, we would consider Kant a transcendental realist.

Space represents a given, infinite magnitude if we base our conception of space on the experience of it. In suggesting this, it may appear that Kant is treating space as something outside of the knower, but that's not what he is arguing. Neither is he arguing that space is separated by distinct experiences in the minds of different knowers, instead of being a single space.

> Now every concept must be thought as a representation which is contained in an infinite number of different possible representations (as their common character), and which therefore contains these *under* itself. It is in this latter way, however, that space is thought; for all the parts of space coexist *ad infinitum.*[141]

To say that "one can represent only a single space" while seemingly experiencing parts of space seems to neglect the possibility that "the single space" is an afterthought of experiencing parts of space, such that the single space is conceptual. The passage quoted just above

[140] *Ibid.,* 75.

[141] *Ibid.,* 69.

characterizes the representation of space *and* the nature of space. This is the difficulty one faces when determining whether Kant is a transcendental idealist or empirical realist. One must be clear when asking about the role of space whether the questions pertain to the representation of space, the experience of space as seemingly outside of the mind, or the intuition of space as an underlying condition in the process of acquiring representations. Kant is a transcendental idealist as he conceives of the representation of space and an empirical realist as he conceives of the intuition of space. These intuitions are features that are unique to the mode of orientating oneself in the world, just as right or left are not characteristics or features of the world but modes of orientation.

Kant's example of a rose helps to demonstrate in what sense he was a transcendental idealist and an empirical realist. Kant writes that when the mind perceives properties of a rose, such as color and texture, these properties do not belong to the rose as an object-in-itself but in the *appearance* of the rose in the mind of the knower. This establishes the *reality*, that is, the objective validity, of space with respect to whatever can be presented to us outwardly as an object. Hence, Kant's empirical realism wants to affirm that we do go beyond the private realm of our own representations, even if the nature of the rose as it is in-itself remains unknowable to us. Since for Kant there is no such rose that can be known, it is best to speak of the rose under two different descriptions, as empirically real and transcendentally ideal. Therefore, Kant also establishes the *ideality* of space with respect to things as they are considered in themselves through reason, that is, without regard to the constitution of sensibility.[142] Hence, as a transcendental idealist, Kant holds that humans know material objects only as appearances in the

[142] *Ibid.*, 72.

mind. But, based on the spatio-temporal features of cognition, such objects as are given in experience are thus empirically real *and* transcendentally ideal.

5.4 Metaphysical Distinctions Concerning Space and Spatiality

In Kant's transcendental idealism he asserts that space and time are the ideal and subjective conditions of sensible intuition. He argues that there is no transcendentally real thing in itself that is the object of our representations. Kant draws a distinction between the noumenal and phenomenal realms, and interpreters disagree about whether this distinction is ontological, conceptual, or epistemic. While we have thoughts about ordinary objects and pure intuitions of space and time when thinking those objects, this is not the same as claiming that pure intuitions of those objects are inherently part of the reality of those objects. For example, the same set of objects--say, a set of billiard balls and cue sticks--can be described in empirical and transcendental terms, and these are entirely different ways of thinking. While there are different ways to think about objects in a kind of second order way, philosophers grant that there is also a first order, pre-thematic intuition of things. What this intuition involves, in terms of the content, is not agreed upon. Are the billiard balls and cue sticks what they are only as a composite of the different ways of thinking about them? This is a very human subject-driven way to conceive of the nature of objects, that objects have to include the various aspects of human thought to be what those objects are. The issue is whether objects exist for us only insofar as they are represented by the mind or if they have a reality apart from human cognition of those objects, the perception and representation of those objects. In other words, do those same objects exist in space and time independent of human cognition?

Paul Guyer claims in his interpretation that Kant firmly argues that things in themselves are neither spatial nor temporal. This is an ontological claim, just as Kant's distinction between the phenomenal and noumenal is an ontological thesis. It also goes beyond the claim that our conception of ordinary things does not include their spatiality and temporality. Guyer asserts that we have to take the difference between the phenomenal and noumenal as an ontological distinction or else Kant's claim that spatiality and temporality are not properties of things also does not follow.

Henry Allison argues differently, asserting that any transcendental condition of knowledge is epistemic and that Kant's idealism can only be read through the lens of epistemic conditions. Allison writes, "By epistemic condition is here understood a necessary condition for representation of objects, that is, a condition without which our representations would not relate to objects or, equivalently, possess objective reality. As such, it could also be termed an "objective condition" since it fulfills an objectivating function." Space and time each count as epistemic conditions. If spatiality is an epistemic condition then space is a facet of human cognition, not a characteristic of the objects of thought. We know objects because we represent them through the epistemic conditions of space and time. We do not not these objects because they are spatiotemporal. Rather, our epistemic conditions of space and time produce representations and, consequently, we know these representations of objects to also exist spatiotemporally. Insofar as we know those objects appear to us via epistemic conditions, those objects also exist in space and time. However, the relevance for this project is Allison's claim about the non-spatiality of things in themselves. A thing in itself is an object that exists independent of our observation of it. There is no way to think of a thing in itself without cognizing, and cognizing it through epistemic conditions is the condition for thinking the thing in

itself, which is not to think of the thing in itself but to have a representation of that thing in the mind. Robinson points out that Allison's claim of objects in space qua appearance does mean that we can only think of them in space only according to the epistemic condition of space, but this does not mean that objects spatiotemporal status is one way or another in virtue of the way they appear to us, as the status of objects can also be other than the way we happen to think about them.[143]

While the non-spatiality thesis is problematic in a few different ways, I am drawn to the status of space in these arguments. Guyer points out, for instance, that Allison's argument about concepts and representations hinges on claims about things and their properties.[144] Things and their properties cannot tell us anything about being, as Kant and Heidegger each contended in their own ways. That was, we might recall, Kant's basis for undercutting the ontological argument. Guyer, on the other hand, bases his claims on the parallel between ontology and what it means to know, what it means to be a being with certain transcendental structures of understanding. Insofar as we come to have representations through *a priori* intuitions of the mind, what we can say about the world follows only in light of those intuitions. Meaning, the ontological makeup of the transcendental structures of understanding create boundaries for what we can assert about the real and actual nature of the things we experience, the claims we make about representations and concepts. Those claims are not about logical possibility, and neither can we make claims about necessity and contingency outside of what we intuit through the structures of understanding. We can make claims about the actual and real existence of

[143] Robinson, H., 1994, "Two Perspectives on Kant's Appearances and Things-in-Themselves", *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 33: 411–441.

[144] Guyer, 336-344.

representations and concepts, but those claims are possible only on the basis of what a person can possibly know, which is delimited from the outset by the constitution of her being.

Kant provided a view of space that carries over into Heidegger's depiction of temporality and spatiality. Heidegger made the ontological difference a central and guiding point as he put himself on the task to recover the question of the meaning of Being, arguing that traditional philosophy had forgotten Being. From the ontological difference, one could pursue ontological or ontic inquiries and yet easily confuse one for the other. The ontical is concerned with facts about beings but the ontological is concerned with the meaning of Being. Space means one thing in an ontic sense and another thing in the ontological sense. Existential space is characterized by concern and being-in as involvement. Ontic space is being in a spatial location, such as being at work or standing beside another person. Mit-sein is a way of being among other in an ontological sense, such that one is thrown into the world of other beings, not beings that one would edge up against in a physical way but in a transcendental way.

The possibility of the materiality of space is set against Kant's exposition of the *a priori* status of space and time, just in case a person is aiming to argue that space is material, as a number of Heidegger's interpreters do. Kant's view of space is relevant for a study of Heidegger's depiction of temporality and spatiality. Kant argued that the objects we conceive of in the mind are not identical to what is "out there" in space. However, there are not two spatial realms, one of the mind and another that is objective space, as our idea of space "out there" is another conceived idea. Kant's view of space and time, however, claimed empirical reality and transcendental ideality. While we tend to think of ourselves experiencing the space around us and the "flow" of time, Kant is in no way using space and time as empirical concepts. The idea of space allows us to think of objects as separate from us, distinct from our inner state. Space and

time are ideal with regard to intuition, insofar as space and time are the form of intuition. But space and time are also real with regard to appearances, as space and time are the matter of intuition. Space and time are "sensible" conditions of sensory experience.

The difference between sensible conditions and sensory experience is tied up in the difference between the metaphysical exposition and transcendental exposition. The metaphysical exposition describes how it is that space and time are contained as *a priori* intuitions. This means that we don't experience space, time, or objects and then abstract from the experience to form a concept. Rather, the metaphysical exposition tells us that because a person already has the *a priori* intuitions of space and time, objects may be represented to us in space and time. The transcendental exposition describes how the *a priori* gives rise to the synthetic *a priori,* such as geometry. A person cannot come to have knowledge of geometry through the intuitions or abstracting from the concept of geometry alone; the concept can only be grounded in and emerge from the sensible intuition of space. The metaphysical exposition and transcendental exposition tell us something about the ontology of space and the workings of the mind. On the one hand, space "applies" to objects and space is real. On the other hand, the human mind, the transcendentally ideal structures, are the basis and possibility of experience, including the experience of the representation of space in the mind. What we have is a human subject-centered account of knowledge and the world. This is not to say that the logical possibility of a world, space, and objects are contingent upon the human mind. The human mind is not a necessary condition for a world, space, and objects to exist. Logical possibility is the wrong claim. Rather, the real possibility of the world, space, and objects for me--the possibility that I can experience them--hinge on transcendental structures of the mind. Of the different types of freedom discussed by Kant, transcendental freedom gives rise to the spontaneity of thought and the freedom of the

will. Insofar as there is space and spatiality, they will be represented for me in the capacity that I have as the type of being that I am, which is the very connection between Kant and Heidegger: they both safeguard the possibility of freedom, of orienting oneself in the world. For Heidegger, we will find that this orienting impulse emerges in the unfolding of *Ereignis.*

5.5 Spatiality in *Being and Time*

In previous chapters I argued that the human does not merely have a body but lives through the body. In this chapter I am arguing that the event of being happens alongside the making room for space, the spacing of space, as space does not merely contain bodies. But this raises a further question of how the body is spatially oriented and how entities going about space have an effect on it. In this chapter, I will see in what ways space emerges from and changes according to the manner in which humans dwell in space in a bodily way.

This inquiry into space is grounded in phenomenology. One may look at the effects of space or the effects of other processes onto space, such as social and economic factors. However, I am concerned with the structure and significance of space insofar as it lends insight into being, and vice versa. But we have to resist depicting space as either ontic or ontological insofar as it involves the experience of space by humans. ""Being in" as it figures in relation to the world is not a matter of spatial *containment,* but of active *involvement,*" writes Jeff Malpas.[145] We will

[145] Malpas, 113.

find that the spatial involves location and orientation in both the objective and subjective senses.[146]

While it is true that Heidegger's early philosophy of being is depicted in temporal terms, this does not mean that space is insignificant. Quite the opposite is the case: being is described as being-*in,* located and constituted by the situation of a place and a structure, the world. I think there is value in tracing what Heidegger posits concerning space and spatiality in *Being and Time,* and comparing it to the development of his thought later on; we can observe that the importance of space for Heidegger as it shifts and develops through his writing, acquiring a more (explicitly) significant place in his later thought. Jeff Malpas notes, "Surprisingly little attention has been paid to the way spatiality emerges and develops in Heidegger's thinking, not to the way in which shifts in Heidegger's understanding of spatiality might be connected with shifts elsewhere in his thought."[147] Malpas points out the problematic nature of the dependence of spatiality on temporality, which is the foundational concept in *Being and Time,* the concept that ties together the unity of *Dasein.* Another thing of note is Heidegger's early dependence on the Cartesian notion of space as *res extensa*. So we can see that temporality is prioritized early on and treated as a phenomenon prior to spatiality, Malpas points out. He further writes:

> "One of the reasons for the problematic status of spatiality in *Being and Time* is Heidegger's evident difficulty in severing the connection between the idea of spatiality and the particular understanding of space as homogenous extension that he takes to be a key element in Cartesianism--one consequence of this is that spatiality in *Being and Time* is presented as an entirely secondary structure. Although Heidegger does advance an account of an existential mode of space that is tied to the teleological ordering of equipment and project, this is not a *sui generis* mode, but is instead derivative of temporality."[148]

[146] Malpas points out that addressing the difference between space in the ontic and ontological senses involves the challenge of describing the body in an objective sense, which is likely one reason why Heidegger shelved the issue of the body early on.

[147] *Ibid.,* 114.

[148] Ibid., 115.

Heidegger describes spatiality as the "aroundness of the surrounding world," and being "grounded in the worldliness of the world."[149] In this case, worldliness precedes spatiality. But in existential terms, the world is not a container called space. We gain a sense of spatiality in, for example, sections like the "Inner Worldly Things at Hand," wherein Heidegger employs spatial terms such as "nearness" and "at hand," what is around and surrounding being. The dimensionality of space is especially constituted by at-handedness in *Being and Time,* which is not an issue of measurement but of presence and availability of what is in a given region.

Going back to Heidegger's earlier philosophy, he makes a very peculiar comment about space in the section on "The Spatiality of Innerworldly Things at Hand" in *Being and Time.* The comment contains a footnote that reveals a very nuanced conception of the relationship between space and places, a thought that Heidegger does not develop until several years later but appears to be considering at the time he wrote *Being and Time*. Heidegger writes, "Space is split up into places."[150] In the comment's footnote on the same page, he writes, "No, rather a peculiar unity of places that are not split up." He seems to be reaching for the idea that space is a multitude of places, not quite sure how to depict the one and the many of space. The lines were written within the context of ontic space and at-handedness, how these are set against and brought to one's attention in light of ontological considerations. He writes that "the actual world discovers the spatiality of space belonging to it" according to the at-handedness of things that become relevant to us, especially, Heidegger describes, when something in a particular region is out of place from

[149] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein und Zeit,* Trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 94. See the section on "The Aroundness of the Surrounding World and the Spatiality of Dasein."

[150] Heidegger, *Being and Time,* 97.

its usual at-handedness (e.g., when something goes missing, reappears, or breaks). Heidegger concludes the section by writing, "The fact that what is at hand can be encountered in its space of the surrounding world is ontically possible only because Dasein itself is "spatial" with regard to its being-in-the-world."[151] We find a distinction between the space of the thing at-hand and Dasein's spatial sense. What we learn is that Dasein's spatiality depends on the transcendental structure of being-in-the-world. We also find that the thing encountered by Dasein enjoys its own place in the world, and that Dasein's encounter with the thing is a relation among other relations. The later Heidegger develops these thoughts in the concept of the fourfold.

5.6 The Fourfold

The beginning of the development of the fourfold can be located as early as Heidegger's lecture on "The Origin of the Work of Art" given in 1934. This lecture marks Heidegger's philosophical turn after *Being and Time,* showing his concern for truth in relation to art, suggesting that art makes truth manifest, which is in contrast with 'world disclosure' derived from Dasein's ways of coping with the world in *Being and Time*. As we saw in chapter two, art makes the world intelligible instead of merely representing the world; likewise, we *know* that something is art when a world or aspect of a world is disclosed by a work of art. When Heidegger introduced the strife between earth and world in the "Origin of the Work of Art," he described the happening of truth as a two-fold structure. The idea develops into the concept of the fourfold in following essays, especially in "Building Dwelling Thinking." In that essay, he writes about how human beings dwell within the "range" of earth and sky, and at the intersection between divinities and mortals. These intersecting elements provide a kind of orientation within

[151] *Ibid.*

the fourfold, while also taking the view of the mortal, of Dasein. Mortals are the ones who dwell, and mortals are oriented within the fourfold. These ontological descriptions, however, are joined with ontic experiences. Heidegger writes, "In saving the earth, in receiving the sky, in awaiting the divinities, in initiating mortals, dwelling propriates as the fourfold preservation of the fourfold."[152]

If phenomenology is a descriptive approach to the being of existence, poetics is an approach that allows Heidegger and his readers a glimpse into the multi-dimensional, immeasurable, ungraspable realm of being and the conditions of being. His use of pictorial-poetic images is an attempt to show, phenomenologically, his understanding of human experience without reducing experience to a metaphysical system. The fourfold is Heidegger's way of illustrating the relational structure of things. Heidegger uses the term "things" in a very specific sense, at different points explaining the nature of the fourfold alongside descriptions of the nature of things. Each of the four elements—earth, sky, mortals, and divinities—maintains a distinct nature and function even as they are defined by the other in a manifold of one, in a multifarious process. This depiction is not the creation of a new metaphysics or a system but Heidegger's way of describing how we orient ourselves as unfolding beings.

Going back to the nature of the relational structure of things, Heidegger uses the term "thing" in a very specific sense. In his essay "The Thing" (1940), he writes that a thing remains whether it is perceived or not. An object is a thing that is perceived, thought, or remembered. We recall the use of the term "object" within Kant's description of the nature of human knowledge. Heidegger writes, to make a distinction, "The thingness of the container [the pitcher] in no way

[152] Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Basic Writings*, Ed. David Farrell Krell (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008), 353.

rests in the material that it is made of, but in the emptiness that contains."[153] As a gift of the gathering in which a pitcher is used, the fourfold is present because it matters to someone, it has meaning for the Being of being who is present to the use of the pitcher. "Since the word "thing," in the usage of Western metaphysics, names that which is at all and is somehow something, the meaning of the word "thing" accordingly changes in correspondence to the interpretation of that which is, --i.e., of beings."[154] Heidegger's "thing" and his notion of object are not the same as Kant's concept of the object of perception (or *Ding an sich*, to be clear). A thing is a thing insofar as it *is*, as that which is. Thus, to be a thing is to gather the fourfold.[155]

Vierung, another reference to the fourfold in German, is a mirroring ring, one that mirrors each of the four as an appropriating. Heidegger writes, "The thing houses the fourfold. The thing things the world. Each thing houses the fourfold into something that respectively lingers of the simplicity of the world."[156] The essay develops the idea of spatiality, the dimension inherent to what it means to dwell, and the "aroundness" of being on earth as a mortal, dwelling at the intersection, the unfolding, of earth, sky, divinities, and mortals. There is a kind of orientation within this description of the fourfold and it takes the view of the mortal, of Dasein. After all, it is the mortals who dwell. These ontological descriptions are joined with ontic experiences.

[153] Martin Heidegger, "The Thing," in *The Heidegger Reader,* Ed. Günter Figal, Trans. Jerome Veith (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 257.

[154] *Ibid.,* 262.

[155] On a side note, since the fourfold consists of earth, sky, mortals, and divinities, how do other lifeforms, such as animals, fit in? Elsewhere, Heidegger writes that the difference between mortals and animals lies in the difference between death as death and death as perishing, and in the "harboring of being" by mortals. This assumes that animals do not have an interest in the meaning of their own death. From a strictly phenomenological lens, we have no idea if that's the case. It's impossible to know. We can only assume the human perspective when we remember Nagel's question, what is it like to be a bat?

[156] *Ibid.,* 265.

The Fourfold requires mention of *Ereignis*. *Ereignis* comes to represent the structure of beings-as-a-whole in Heidegger's later thought. I discussed it briefly in chapter two, and it applies in this chapter on spatiality because *Ereignis* is Heidegger's way of showing the interrelatedness of all beings and our embeddedness in the structure of the world, our environment.

5.7 Dwelling in Space

The fourfold helps us to understand existential space. Heidegger used *Geviert* in his original writings, the German term for "square" or "courtyard," thus invoking the spatial quality in the arrangement of the fourfold. As Julian Young notes, "The fourfold is Heidegger's account of what makes a place or space a dwelling-space." Dwelling is the manner in which Dasein is a "being in the world," and the activity of dwelling occurs as a process of engagement with the elements that make up the fourfold. Dwelling locates one in a place, a situation that includes a relationship with things. In telling us that dwelling is a defining characteristic of Being, of being human, we also learn about the spacing of space.

Dwelling describes the relationship between Dasein and things, and characterizes Dasein as in an existential space. "To be is to dwell" is a central concept for Heidegger. When we dwell fully we "save" or free things to be in their own essence, which is a claim about truth. So we see that dwelling also helps to understand the relationship between Dasein and truth. On a related note, when Heidegger writes about the clearing, he is addressing our access to and distance from truth, how we understand and relate to truth, not in an epistemic sense but in an existential one. Which is to say, Being appears as a sheltering and a showing with regard to truth. Our

understanding of Being is also an understanding of truth, how we relate to truth, and the essence of everything around us.[157]

5.8 Sculpture

Sculpture's philosophical significance is found in the way it sheds light on the nature of space, as space is the artist's medium just as much as the wood or metal elements are considered artistic mediums. "Art and Space" was written by Heidegger in 1969 and deals specifically with sculpture. The essay deals with the relationship between space, language, and art, specifically in the mode of sculpture. Space happens through the character of spacing, and this can happen through the involvement of humans, Heidegger argues. Works of art, such as sculpture, emerge through the relational character of space, such that space is affected by what occurs within it. Thus, space has an interactive character. Space is construed in different terms depending on its usefulness, function, and intended use. Heidegger does not think of space as a neutral entity or blank canvas but conceives of it as having limiting features and the capacity to enable or prevent the appearance of truth. At least, this is how we seem to experience space. Heidegger admits that space leaves no traces of its origins or provides markers for the bounds of discourse about space.

Heidegger's understanding of the relationship between work to truth shifts from the time he wrote "The Origin of the Work of Art" and the later essay, "Art and Space." A shift in language also entailed an even more nuanced understanding of truth. Specifically, in the early essay Heidegger described the work of art as the setting-into-the-work of truth. He described the

[157] Heidegger's fourfold is a shift from a God to four "gods," so to speak. The fourfold consists in four phenomenological modalities of "presencing": earth, sky/heavens, divinities, and mortals. We also find the later Heidegger's "cross-wise striking-through" of being presented in a lecture given in 1955, "On the Question of Being."

bringing-into-the-work of truth in the later essay, "Art and Space." The first articulation, he felt, created an imposing relationship between art and the uncovering of truth. The latter depiction is more in the mode of art as facilitation. This relationality means that space as well as the "void" that is there (not empty, but more rightly a clearing) exist according to a collaboration by all things and persons within that space. Collaboration and interaction, then, are defining features of space.

Language, Heidegger suggests, is the way the understand the characteristics of space, to listen to language by paying attention to the very word "space" (*Raum*), because it invokes the idea of clearing a space (*Raumen*). Heidegger writes the following:

> "We attempt to listen to language. Whereof does it speak, in the word "space" [*Raum*]? Clearing-away [*Raumen*] speak in it. This mean: to clear out [*roden*], to make the wilderness open. Clearing-away brings forth what is free, the open for humans' settling and dwelling."[158]

This clearing is an open space where mortals can dwell freely, where a region may open for the gathering of the fourfold. From the human vantage point, this clearing space occurs simultaneously with a becoming present to a place, as "human dwelling sees itself consigned." Heidegger distinguishes between place and region--place unfolds and gathers things as it expands a region. We might remember from Heidegger's essay "The Thing," things gather the fourfold and institute a place; things are places. If sculpture is a thing and is productive in the spacing of space then sculpture can found a place and, as a work of art, be truth-disclosive about that place and the truth of Being.

Along these lines, sculpture does not confront or occupy space. Sculpture is embodied in the making-space of a place; sculpture is a component of the character and volume of a place and

[158] Heidegger, "Art and Space," in *The Heidegger Reader*, 307.

not merely an object filling the interior of a space. Sculpture is not merely an object that makes a space less empty by filling some part of a void. Heidegger writes the following.

> Sculptural formations are bodies. Their matter, consisting of different materials, is formed in various ways. The forming occurs in a demarcation as enclosing and excluding. With this, space comes into play. The sculpted formation occupies space and casts it as a closed, breached, and empty volume. Familiar states of affairs, and yet puzzling.[159]

However, I contend that the work of sculpture in "instituting places" is not unique to the visual arts generally or to sculpture specifically, even if sculpture is powerful in its capacity to found a place as a work of art. Heidegger ended the "Art and Space" eessay with a quote from Goethe: "It is not always necessary that what is true should embody itself; it suffices for it to float about intelligibly and evoke harmony as it drifts through the air like a serious but friendly sound of a bell." Going back to Heidegger's broad claim that art is the bringing-into-work of truth, which itself is the unconcealment of Being, it is worth considering whether truth depends at all on embodiment, as well as the possibility that truth lays no claim to showing itself at all in order to be what it is. It is noteworthy that Goethe invokes the sound of a bell and Heidegger, in choosing this quote, might have finished this essay pondering the role of music and non-visual arts in the bringing-into-work of truth through art construed more broadly. Indeed, Heidegger had even more to say about poetry's truth-function character than he ever did about sculpture, as we have seen in other parts of this project.

5.9 Building and Dwelling

[159] Martin Heidegger, "Art and Space," in *The Heidegger Reader*, 305-6.

Human beings are essentially dwellers, Heidegger writes in his essay, "Building Dwelling Thinking." We do not cultivate or erect in order to dwell but build because we are those who already dwell on the earth. In this essay, Heidegger again turns to language to better understand the nature of this already-dwelling. Listening to the Gothic word *Wunian*, Heidegger finds that the character of dwelling is in being preserved and at peace in a place. He writes, "To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its essence."[160] We can hear overtones of concepts Heidegger develops more fully elsewhere: *Lichtung* (clearing) and *Offenheit* (openness). Spatial concepts such as clearing and openness are the existential spaces that make it possible to orient oneself as a being who dwells.

In *Being and Time,* being-in is disclosed by the unity of temporality and the care structure, lighted from the inside out, that makes being open and cleared for itself. Hubert Dreyfus tells us in his commentary on *Being and Time*, "Dasein as thrown, falling, projecting, i.e., as being-already-in, being-amidst and being-ahead of itself, can now be seen to have what Heidegger calls an *ecstatic temporal structure,* i.e., the activity of clearing is *outside itself* in opening up the past, present, and future."[161]Dasein is engaged in the activity of clearing, and a clearing results. This clearing is a shared situation, so we can see that the emphasis on temporality keeps the spatial aspect of shared space in the background, even though space is just as fundamental to the shared clearing and the activity of disclosing being as temporality is. Heidegger's notion of the clearing shifts in the 1930s and he begins to describe it in relation to

[160] *Ibid.,* 351.

[161] Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's* Being and Time, *Division I* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991), 244.

his understanding of truth, describing *aletheia*, the unconcealment of being, as clearing (*Lichtung*). We remember from the essay on the "Origins of the Work of Art" that the unconcealing being also involves the concealment of being.[162] In this way, the clearing involves the whole of entities, and what Heidegger initially described as the interplay of earth and world developed into the fourfold as the structure of the clearing.

Heidegger discusses the fourfold at length in "Building Dwelling Thinking."[163] This essay speaks heavily, implicitly so, of spatiality, the dimensionality inherent in what it means to dwell, and the aroundness" of being on earth as a mortal, dwelling at the intersection, the unfolding, of earth, sky, divinities, and mortals.[164] Building emerges from dwelling, and the dwelling is what humans aim for in their being. But the meaning of building toward dwelling as an end cannot be understood, the meaning of it, without language as the standard by which we understand the essence of the activity of dwelling, or the essence of any activity.[165] Turning to language, Heidegger explicates the meaning of the verb *Bauen*, listening to language, reaching for its original meaning "to dwell" for clues about the essence of being. He inserts the following into his text.

1. Building is really dwelling.
2. Dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on the earth.

[162] The primordial clearing is an open place in which Enlightenment occurs through the emerging-into-presence of entities as what they are in their essence. Our openness to the world is the very foundation of the possibility of unconcealment, of seeing things in their essence.

[163] One problem with his argument is that it hinges on specific languages, especially German. For further study, it would be worth considering whether the substance of the argument can stand on its own when such philological reasoning is omitted.

[164] Dreyfus argues that Heidegger's notion of Being-in-the-World confuses the spatial sense from the existential sense. This is meaningful for Dreyfus because, as he points out, there is a difference between social space and the spatiality of individual experience. Malpas takes up this line of thought and connect it to Heidegger's account of the body.

[165] Martin Heidegger, "*Building Dwelling Thinking,"* in *Basic Writings*, 348.

> 3. Building as dwelling unfolds into the building that cultivates growing things and the building that erects buildings.[166]

Heidegger asserts that the relation between locale and space is in those things that "allow a site for the fourfold."[167] Heidegger tells us that the four elements are distinct and yet they are also a onefold, enjoying a "simple oneness of the four."[168] Allowing a site for the fourfold amounts to preserving the fourfold, which is to allow a thing--a bridge or a pitcher--to be what it is. The site of the fourfold is a location, and locations are what allow for the spacing of space. A person who institutes a location by building a bridge does not have to always be in that location for the space to emerge and remain there, as long as the bridge remains and gathers the fourfold. Heidegger writes the following:

> The spaces through which we go daily are provided for by locales; their essence is grounded in things of the type of buildings. If we pay heed to these relations between locales and spaces, between spaces and space, we get a clue to help us in thinking of the relation of man and space.[169]

Heidegger writes further on, "Man's relation to locales, and through locales to spaces, inheres in his dwelling. The relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling, thought essentially."[170] Building includes the elements of planning and of producing. In contrast, or, perhaps, by comparison, what is the relation between the fourfold and the world of art, the difference or similarity between building and creating? Heidegger describes the effect that a bridge has on a landscape, which brings to mind the effect that sculpture has on a place: the

[166] *Ibid.,* 350.

[167] *Ibid., 356.*

[168] *Ibid.,* 352.

[169] *Ibid.,* 358.

[170] *Ibid., 359.*

aroundness of things--the bridge to the landscape--is related to the work of art, specifically of a sculpture, on the landscape. The parallel has to do with the spacing of space, which occurs as room is made for a sculpture or a bridge. The work of art and the bridge affect the space that has been enlarged and opened for it. Sculpture as a work of art and the bridge as a building can be what they are only insofar as they remain in that specific location, in relation to all the other things and entities that show up there. A difference between the building and a work of art, however, is what they are able to reveal. A statue embodies space while also disclosing something true about that space and the larger world, something that was previously hidden from view. The work of art is other than human, the unconcealing of truth. Something is revealed to the human--discovered, shown. Building and dwelling, however, are the ways through which humans become what they are, the ways they locate themselves and pursue what is most essential for mortals.

"Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build," Heidegger writes. Dwelling as an ontological characteristic of being precedes building, and it is an impulse that continues throughout life, as Heidegger notes in the passage below.

> The proper dwelling plight lies in this, that mortals ever search anew for the essence of dwelling, that they *must ever learn to dwell*. What if man's homelessness consisted in this, that man still does not even think of the *proper* plight of dwelling as *the* plight? Yet as soon as man *gives thought* to his homelessness, it is a misery no longer. Rightly considered and kept well in mind, it is the sole summons that *calls* mortals into their dwelling.[171]

Dwelling is not completed upon the completion of the construction of a bridge or a building. Mortals attempt to find a home in the word for as long as they exist, and in the process of building mortals also appropriate the fourfold. Being in the fourfold, simultaneously

[171] *Ibid.*, 363.

instituting locations, mortals care for and preserve the entities they encounter in the space in which they dwell. This shows the relational structure of all entities and describe the spacing of space as a fundamental part of the situation of being. Dwelling is an activity that being pursues along the path of life, a way of continuing to find one's grounding, affecting those entities within its shared space and being affected by those entities at the same time.[172]

5.10 The Social Production of Space: Lefebvre's View

Henri Lefebvre's spatial turn involved moving beyond the impasse of the linguistic emphasis in philosophy to the emergence of a materialist ontology. Lefebvre's work on the overlap between the aesthetic realm and the quotidian demonstrate how art, architecture, and everyday activities create and craft an exterior landscape, the space in which one moves, as well as an interior landscape and development of a sense of self. This spatial turn shows how the "landscape" of one's life works within the temporal structure of historical narrative to constitute the self as the subject of that narrative. The two spaces of experience, the interior and exterior, are inextricably joined for Lefebvre because of the way a person emerges over time as that person, how ontic experiences affect the sense of self. This dynamic, however, parallels what Heidegger describes about the ontological situatedness of being in the world and the care structure.

Dasein's concerns for the self are understood and responded to only in light of Being's thrownness in the world as a being among beings. In our everyday lives, likewise, our interior space and affected by and responds to what we encounter in the exterior. The experience of

[172] Building for the sake of dwelling also points to the nature of Being as *Ereignas,* the "letting" of being and ground of being in Heidegger's later thought.

being a person occurs as a complex of the interior and exterior. Even dissociating from the world and "going inward" is a response to external stimuli; we cannot escape or truly compartmentalize these different layers of experience. The surrealists, for example, were deliberate in their attempt to show the fluidity and lack of borders between one's "inner" life and the "outside" material realm of existence. Even though Lefebvre was, ultimately, critical of the surrealist movement, he appropriated the aesthetic expression of human existence attempted by the surrealists to the concreteness of everyday bodily experiences. In doing so, Lefebvre showed how the manner of the work of art, its "explosive" ability to create worlds, literally "worlding," could be expanded to the everyday that itself "must be defined as a totality."[173] While the aesthetic view can too easily become a privileged perspective, the manner in which art illuminates what it means to be human can be utilized at the level of the everyday. In other words, what typically does not count as art still functions to create (social) space and embodied persons in a manner similar to the productive and constructive capacity of art. For example, architecture is the embodiment of art in a public setting, and the average person may not realize or appreciate the artistic intention put into a building, perhaps only noticing the functional or usable aspects of the space. Public buildings are a fascinating study in shared space, materiality, and habitation. Lefebvre's view of the landscape of ordinary life, in light of what was previously discussed in this chapter, is an exploration in itself of the intersection between the concept of the fourfold and the work of art.

Lefebvre agrees with Nietzsche who argued for the primordial nature of space against the Hegelian view of space as the product of historical time. The shift provided in Lefebvre's thought is from space as a product of historical time to social space as product and producer. Insofar as we dwell in space and orient ourselves within, affected by what we encounter in it, we

[173] Henri Lefebvre, *"Critique of Everyday Life, Volume 1: Introduction,* J. Moore, trans, (London: Verso 1991), 97.

also affect space in a mutually recursive manner. Lefebvre wrote, "(social) space is a (social) product."[174] This view of space combined with Lefebvre's view of art, especially through his exploration of architecture and the surrealists, is one depiction of what it means to be an embodied person.

5.11 Conclusion

My operating line of thought in this chapter has been that the production of space includes the perceived, conceived, and the lived. What I mean by this is that space has a dynamic nature for a few reasons: one has to do with the way that being experiences space through the structure of being, what the later Heidegger would describe as orienting oneself in space. The other reason has to do with the relational nature of beings and things encountered in space. We find that space is not a void. In fact, what one asserts about the nature of space depends on the lens through which she analyzes space.

We found that Kant's transcendental project parallels Heidegger's structure of care.[175] Both thinkers created systems that, upon careful study, we cannot reduce to any one of the elements within the system to establish a ground, because we find that the order of the elements in the process, along with their mutual recursiveness, matters for the whole. The idea that a subject and what the subject essentially is cannot be based on just any one element of characteristic of the structure, such as materiality, body, or the transcendental structures of thought. Each element within the system illuminates the other elements; each only makes sense,

[174] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Donald Nicholson-Smith, trans, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1991), 26.

[175] Malpas, 81-82.

and the being is the being that it is, only within the larger structures and the mutually recursive nature of the process of all the elements of that structure. That is to say, in the early Heidegger, being is a unity of experience in its ontic and ontological constitution. Dasein tell us *that* it is, and the shift to *Ereignis* tells us that it is an event and a happening, a being-in-the-world that is what it is within the context of, part of, and co-constituting the space in which it exists. *Ereignis* is the event of orienting oneself in space. The fourfold is an apt illustration of this very point, as is dwelling. The world is a dwelling, not a container. Dwelling is a fitting articulation for the impulse to ground oneself and seek a unity of experience for the self, to make sense of the meaning of being.

The later Heidegger's focus on the ontological category of Being shifts away from an earlier emphasis on time and meaning to an emphasis on unconcealment, thinking, and *Ereignis*. These emphases reveal layers of understanding, or, rather, of receiving, the truth of Being. Heidegger places much emphasis on language in the task of unconcealing being, our relation to language as the framework of meaning and the installing of a world. One goes beyond the thinking of entities when one thinks being, when one thinks the truth of being. It is a *way* of thinking. Heidegger pushes for a receptive posture, one of listening, in order to dwell in the truth of being. A person gains a new perspective, insight into the relational nature of existence, the transience of what *is* at any given time. This is the thrust of phenomenology: letting things manifest in their nature, but a waiting or receiving that is not a passive posture. As I emphasized before, Heidegger thought of ontology and phenomenology as inseparable inquiries, since how we come to think something--to receive it--cannot be separated from what that thing is, as thinking and Being are essentially the same.[176] Heidegger's thought shifts from an emphasis on

[176] As early as Parmenides, philosophers were asking, "For thinking and Being are the same?"

Dasein to *aletheia* over the course of his writings, coming to regard *aletheia* as "the power of the presence of all beings and things."[177] The ground of being as *Ereignis* is a movement in and out of presence, thus avoiding a metaphysics of presence. Being is not synonymous with presenting, and Heidegger is working in opposition to a metaphysics of presence--presence is already an interpretation of being. From Plato onward, philosophers have thought being as a property or essence that is enduringly present in things. This "metaphysics of presence" thinks of Being as substance and overlooks the conditions that enable entities to be present and matter.

The work of unconcealing by language is via two approaches: 1) thinking and 2) poetry. Language, we will find, is not an operation but a stance, a point of view.[178] Poetic language brings one into a particular relation with language, in such a way that the unconcealment of being can be made possible. Poetry has a special role in unconcealing Being, as does sculpture, and in showing the relational and dynamic nature of concepts like space, Being, and truth.[179] The descriptions became increasingly spatial through time, that of clearing and dwelling.

Malpas argues that Heidegger's shifts around space and spatiality coincide with the emergence of the question of the body, which, in turn, influences the question of the world. When Heidegger writes about bodies, we have to pay attention to whether he is referring to a general idea of body or if he means human corporeality, as we saw in chapter three. When he discusses sculpture, for example, he is referring to something quite different from the human body. Exploring sculpture was one important way for Heidegger to develop the mutually

[177] In a letter to Hannah Arendt, Heidegger expresses frustration because of others' tendency to subjectivize and intellectualize his understanding of *aletheia*, that it is "the power of the presence of all beings and things."

[178] John Richardson, *Heidegger* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 284.

[179] Truth and Being must not be mistaken as synonymous: Being gives insight into Truth from the "bottom up," as an unconcealing of the most fundamental aspects of what is, instead of a top-down containment of truth, one that attempts to control the conditions of truth-seeking.

dependent concepts of space and body, as Jeff Malpas has shown in his study on Heidegger.

> "The structure of equipment thus requires a complex space that belongs to equipment as such (it is a space in which each item of equipment stands in relation to other items" and that also belongs to *Dasein* both individually (it is a space in which each *Dasein* finds itself) and "collectively" (it is also a common, "public" space in which *Dasein* encounters others, and within which *Dasein* can act with others)--a space that is "objective," "subjective," and "intersubjective."[180]

The body exists within a region of the world, which can be argued happens in the ontic and ontological sense, and we see the body's limit not as an ending or boundary but as a beginning, a horizon.[181] However, the spatial does not answer the question about what the body is any more than the body tells us what the spatial is. The two concepts illuminate the character and nature of the other, and we see, especially through sculpture, that space is not an open void but actually does something. Space is productive.

[180] Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place*, 117.

[181] *Ibid.*, 116.

CHAPTER 6:
FLESH: AFFECTIVITY AND RELATIONALITY

"We have to reject the age-old assumptions that put the body in the world and the seer in the body, or, conversely, the world and the body in the seer as in a box." - Maurice Merleau-Ponty[182]

6.1 The Distinction Between Body and Flesh

In the last chapter of this study, I am proposing that Heidegger's phenomenology and writings about art guide us toward an understanding of the "materiality" of the body as flesh. While Heidegger's philosophy lacks explicit and direct references to the body, I am arguing that his thought contributes to an enriched and more in-depth understanding of embodiment. This is especially the case with Heidegger's ideas of moods and affectivity. While Heidegger's project was ultimately about shedding light on the meaning of being, his formulations on meaning and being have implications for a phenomenology of everyday things and also of the body. The flesh has a material basis but is experienced as the body that I am, which is why a phenomenology of the body can only culminate by meditating on the flesh.

Earlier in chapter one, we noted the need to rework discursive practices and material phenomena, insofar as they emerge together in the work of art, so conceived by Heidegger, to see how this approach might bring newer and deeper insights into the question of the body. I noted very early on that I aimed to avoid reifying normative descriptions of the body, those without a material basis, and to also avoid construing the body as an effect of discourse (or, discursive processes). What has emerged in this discussion, as far as I interpret the matter, is a needed shift to articulate experiences of the material self through the lens of flesh.

[182] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 138.

What does this accomplish? Flesh is that liminal space between experience and matter that avoids, insofar as we attempt to theorize experiences, reducing the ontology of the body into one thing or another. The body is irreducibly a both/and phenomena, which is to identify a kind of antinomy of thought, and a chiasma. But it is the very nature of experience to join seemingly incompatible happenings into one moment. The availability of different events into one moment is a characteristic of human experience. It is possible to be physically present and emotionally detached; awake and simultaneously in a dreamlike state; materially based and ontologically becoming, in such a way that the materiality of my being is also my ontological becoming. The nature of being human is an ontic and ontological affair, and the body is fundamental to both lenses of analysis. The flesh is ontic and ontological, being and becoming, a perpetual meeting of being and becoming.

Thinking arises in the body. Thought emerges from experiencing bodily entanglement with the things of the wider world, emerging from interactions with other persons and phenomena. The body is the aspect of my being that constitutes entanglement with the world. As espoused by Merleau-Ponty, ideas belong to the flesh in a very concrete way; ideas emerge and coalesce in and from the flesh, such that flesh is other than matter or idea. Flesh is characterized by both and is its own kind of element. This is the chiasmic characteristic of depicting flesh and the antinomy of thinking flesh; the concept requires going outside of how we typically thinking of materiality and idealism, going outside of how we think of body and mind.

This is a phenomenology of the body as flesh. In phenomenology, the content of our stream of thought is the object of inquiry. My project looks at bodily experience as the object of investigation. I look at the experience of the work of art--a full sensory and affective experience--as a lens into understanding bodily experience. We have to look at worldliness then, thinking

space and time together. Just as spatiality does not resolve the issue of the body in Heidegger, thinking space, time, and the body together do not resolve the issue of what materiality is. However, bringing these concepts into focus through a phenomenology of the body through the work of art gives us a way to refocus the very questions. Answers are, in a sense, contained within the questions themselves; answers are constrained by and framed by the question at hand.

This study makes no claims to resolve the issue of materiality, the essence of what materiality is or its fundamental characteristics. I do, however, hope to gain insight into materiality, specifically, the nature of the body as flesh. Far from making conclusive statements about materiality, I am suggesting that the lived-body can be conceived of in terms of flesh. There is no lack of literature on the nature of flesh, at this point. What I am interested in examining is the possible relationship between how the lived-body is experienced as flesh and if, in the nature of becoming, this has concrete and tangible effects on the objective, material body.

6.2 Metaphysical Shifts and the Body

Nietzsche and Whitehead offer ways to understand the shift from being to becoming, to understand how it is that material beings are not singularities but interconnected entities that affect and are affected by each other, changing and becoming as an effect of those encounters. Whitehead's challenge to the "bifurcation of nature" in human thought provides a powerful way to conceive of flesh, to avoid reducing thought to materialism or idealism. We will also find that Nietzsche and Whitehead arrive at their respective conceptions of morality through their conceptions of body, of what it means to be immanent to the world as a material entity.

6.2.1 Friedrich Nietzsche

Nietzsche argues that the body interprets experience insofar as it is affected by what he describes as the chaos of the world. Nietzsche thinks of the body as a foundation for the person experiencing the world, asserting the primacy of the body for its capacity to interpret experience, as the locus of the constitution of reality for the self, as the body interposes itself between the world and the self, such that "everything begins through the body." Eric Blondel writes, "The body is a series of instincts (*Instinkte*) or drives (Tribe) that constitute reality as they interpret it.[183] In other words, knowledge and even the concept of the self hinges on the body being affected by the chaos of the world, by sensory experience. The will to power is the basic drive in all living things. Nietzsche was life-affirming in that he asserted a creative and instinctual attitude about life and the self, resulting in the concept of the Übermensch. He regarded truth as perspectival and dependent on the view of the subject, such that truth is not an absolute. The will is the force behind creativity, self-affirmation, and is even synonymous with life, affirming liberation from tradition and others' expectations.

Nietzsche argued that the transcendental, god, morality, and ideas about an afterlife create self-alienation in humans. He asserted a this-worldly vision of life as the only situation that should concern humans. In the development of Nietzsche's thought, this culminated in a proclamation about the death of god, an announcement meant to turn our eyes earthward. It is simplistic and inaccurate to think of Nietzsche as attacking the Western god of Abraham and Israel; he was attacking the god of the philosophers, the god of metaphysics and morality, and any regulating transcendental concept that creates constraints on human freedom and the primordial drive for life. Individual human freedom is possible only if the primordial drive for

[183] Eric Blondel, *Nietzsche: Body and Culture* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 206

life and power, drives that emerge from instinct and a bodily basis, are realized and acted upon. Nietzsche called this primordial drive the "will to power," an impulse grounded in the passage of time, as the will to power wills the future, the possible, and the yet undetermined. Nietzsche writes, "Even that body within which, as was previously assumed, individuals treat one another as equals--this happens in every healthy aristocracy--must, if it is a living and not a decaying body, itself do all that to other bodies which the individuals within it refrain from doing to one another: it will have to be the will to power incarnate, it will want to grow, expand, draw to itself, gain ascendancy--not out of any morality or immorality, but because it *lives*, and because life *is* will to power."[184] Thus, the will to power can only progress into the future as struggle, strife for power, and overcoming.

Nietzsche's "death of God and we have killed him" assertion from *The Gay Science* was not directed to a divine being as much as it referred to the condition of modernity, a condition characterized by skepticism, transformation, and the recognition of the possibility of self-determination. As the modern mind experiences anxiety and the absurd, it should lead to will to power, not back to relief found in a god. Nietzsche rejected any epistemologies and metaphysics involving transcendence and universality. He took issue with hypocrisies he found in Christian metaphysics and criticized what he considered philosophy's overstated praise for reason in Kant and Hegel. Nietzsche criticized religion from a highly original moral perspective. Nietzsche claimed that religion breeds hostility to life because it produces two types of characters: a weak servile character, one that is filled with resentment towards those in power, and the contrasting character of the Übermensch, or superman, who creates and realizes his own values. In *The Gay Science,* Nietzsche proclaims that God, the protector of the weak and once alive, is now dead,

[184] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future,* Trans. R.J. Hollingdale (New York, NY: Viking Penguin Inc., 1973), 175.

that humans have killed him. Now that god is dead, Nietzsche claims that we need to grasp the will to power, a primordial impulse that is part of all things and guides them to their full development within the natural world. Further, Nietzsche casts the will to power as a force of artistic and creative energy in human nature.

"Self-overcoming," so conceived by Nietzsche, was a strategy with philosophical and personal meaning. A drive for power is ultimately behind all moralities and rationalities. Nietzsche's lasting influence has been to show the importance of understanding why ideas are held as true and absolute; he had a secondary interest in the content of those ideas. Ideas and values change over time, they overcome themselves, and Nietzsche sought to hone in on the driving force behind the shifts in some ideas and the tenacity of others.

From Heidegger's lecture notes of 1944/1945 Winter Semester in Frieburg, he writes:

> "We believe we know in which realm and space buildings stand and in which realm the trees grow. We barely think about which realm philosophy, thinking, is in and in which realm art is, and what they are. We do not even think about the fact that philosophy and art could themselves in each case be the realms of the sojourn of the human."[185]

Heidegger describes philosophy as a sojourn in the "region of what remains to-be-thought," suggesting that it is part of the essence of humans to be in this realm just as much as dwelling is the essence of being human.[186] To say that all humans philosophize is to claim that all humans are thinkers, as, to think is to philosophize. Heidegger writes, "The human is the thinking being."[187] However, it is possible to not feel at home within the realm of thinking. To

[185] Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Philosophy: Thinking and Poetizing* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011), 2.

[186] *Ibid.*

[187] *Ibid.*

this possibility, Heidegger claims that one needs to be guided along the way, to become more thoughtful, that "we should become more contemplative [*nachdenklicher*] and more reflective [*andenker*], and thereby, learn to genuinely [*eigentlich*] think."[188] Seeking a guide to thinking, Heidegger believes that we should turn to the poets and thinkers, grouping those two together because both involve contemplation and meditation that emerge from the word, a deepened awareness that is then expressed in language. Using metaphor and symbol, poetry expresses that which cannot be contained within language, doing so through language. There is a constant deferral of the true and real, allowing glimpses of the real and true to be caught through the work of art. Heidegger turns to the work of Nietzsche and Hölderlin, for the way in which both weave poetry and philosophy together.

In attempting to describe what it means to be human, Nietzsche claims that all humans are a becoming insofar as life is synonymous with the will to power. This is to characterize the being of humans, the will to power, as something we do and a way of being involved in the world. Nietzsche confronts Western substance metaphysics by describing the will to power as the key characteristic of being human. Heidegger confronts Western metaphysics by asserting that existence--to dwell, to think--is the primary characteristic of being human. This is why Heidegger argues that philosophy has to shift away from metaphysics to a meditation on how we live and dwell, how we orient ourselves in spaces and the space of the world.

The human entity is not reducible to a what or a substance but is characterized by the manner of our being in the world. Commenting on Nietzsche's fundamental idea of what it means to be human, Heidegger writes, "will and willing are always a becoming . . . the fundamental trait of all beings in their being appears in the will to power according to Nietzsche,

[188] *Ibid.*

the being-character of this being [*Seinscharakter dieses Seins*] still remains undetermined and un-thought whenever we are merely content with saying: all beings are will to power."[189] But what is the connection to poetry right here? What do poetry and will to power have to do with each other? The answer has to do with the fundamental character of Nietzsche's thought, a thought that Heidegger believes is concealed within the doctrine of "the eternal return of the same" and the relation of this doctrine to the idea of the will to power.[190] At the convergence of the eternal return and the will to power is the "poetizing" of the figure Zarathustra.[191]

Heidegger alludes to Nietzsche's genealogical method as he unpacks the nature of human thought, and, more specifically, the effect of modern thought on humans. Take, for instance, the concept of god. Heidegger was very much influenced by Nietzsche's uncovering of a metaphysical core in the anthropocentric projection of a god. Giving rise to such a projection is a twofold issue that Heidegger invites us to consider. First, there is a question about the scope of human creativity and the nature of such creativity. Secondly, we have to consider both the historical and metaphysical foundations for human creativity, especially with regard to thoughts that become widespread socio-historical ideas, concepts that become regulative of human behavior. The "Creative" in the human is also the basis of human thought. Heidegger even comments, "Everything that is, is one single anthropomorphism."[192] The willing of the self, combined with the objectification of the world, comprise the metaphysical core of the modern world and the idea of culture as the epitome of human existence. The highest point of this

[189] *Ibid.,* 7.

[190] *Ibid.,* 9.

[191] *Ibid.,* 13.

[192] *Ibid.,* 19.

impulse is the reification of the human in the figure of a god. We can see that what Nietzsche takes issue with for modern thought is the projection of truth, the elevating of humans as those who can see through to the objects themselves, to name them and assign them a place in the world.

Nietzsche argues that we are not privy to an objective view of things as they "really" are; a person's perspective on the world and even the experience of the self is not a collection of facts, only interpretations. He expressed this in the *Genealogy of Morals*, "There is *only* a seeing from a perspective, *only* a 'knowing' from a perspective, and the *more* emotions we express concerning a thing, the *more* eyes, we train on the same thing, the more complete will be our 'idea' of that thing, our 'objectivity.'"[193] In other words, no belief, value, or perception of fact can be divorced from a point of view, a perspective that involves interpreting that which is under consideration. For this reason, he denied the tenability of religious and metaphysical interpretations accounts. Not only was the "God hypothesis" problematic, but metaphysics could only make partial claims because of the problem of perspective. Nietzsche believed that one should come to terms with the disappointment of theology and metaphysics, to radically accept that the world lacks inherent value and an ultimate purpose. This vision led Nietzsche to accept the world in the state that he found it, to avoid finding himself wishing that things were otherwise, instead asserting an attitude of the will to power, an urge to live and behave in ways that are the opposite of fear.

Attempting to create guiding personal values, Nietzsche condemned all accounts of values that emerged from morality, the transcendent, or a metaphysical world. Rather than beginning his argument by focusing on specific standards and regulations about right and wrong,

[193] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals: A Polemic*, Trans. Michael A. Scarpitti (New York, NY: Viking Penguin Books, 2013), 106.

changing the content of rules and moralities, Nietzsche first pointed to *how* ascetic ideals and morality result in a weakened human. He honed in on how shared values, especially religious ones, negate life along ethical lines. Specifically, Nietzsche condemned master morality, slave morality, and priestly morality. Master morality is the distinction between good and bad, as defined by those in the noble realm who consider themselves "good." Slave morality delineates the difference between good and evil. The good are those without power, those who become reflective and cunning. The "evil" are those who hold the power and oppress the good. Priestly morality draws a distinction between clean and unclean. The clean is defined by an anti-metaphysical worldview, seeing purity as a cure for social problems. The unclean are bad because they give into sex and respond to the body's physical desires and demands. What we find in these distinctions is social control through the recognition of social hierarchies.

Nietzsche asserts that the weak require belief in a free subject to explain how they are different from the powerful, convincing themselves that "turning the other cheek" is a sign of righteous character (i.e., choose the path of weakness for its redemptive value). Nietzsche believes that this only admits individual weakness and reinforces powerlessness. There is a paradox at work here: ascetic ideals weaken and yet they also serve an important and lasting purpose. Specifically, ascetic ideals keep sick slaves in line and isolated. The ascetic priests direct the fault for sickness and weakness back onto those who suffer, providing ways to deal with suffering and weakness. However, ascetic priests provide meaning and deflect resentment. They give meaning to suffering and preserve the will of the people against oblivion. Physical purity and bringing the body under one's control, managing the body's carnal desires and passions is said to free the soul and bring one closer to god. The distinctions are not universal and change over time depending on defines values and has the power to assert those values.

Psychological interiority or the 'soul' of humans is created by a process of remembering as opposed to forgetfulness of our primitive ancestors, Nietzsche tells us. "Remembering" involves learning to think differently, such as distinguishing between necessary and accidental phenomena. Humans acquire a conscience that allows for reason and making promises. Compensation and contractual obligations lie at the heart of guilt and bad conscience, but not in the sense that they are the result of punishment. The result of punishment is a sharpened intellect and an improved memory. The human being transitions from a free, instinctual being to an individual whose aggression is unleashed internally, which, Nietzsche admits, involves a loss.

Amor fati is Latin for "love of fate," a willing love or acceptance of all the events and circumstances in life. Nietzsche used the expression to describe the attitude of a person who affirms the events in her life as destined, including any suffering, not feeling deep remorse or loss over negative experiences. *Amor fati* is in contrast to Christian ideas about sin and repentance. Instead of feeling regret for past mistakes and asking forgiveness for them, Nietzsche asserted that we should live life with a positive affirmation of the past, that a person should even be willing to live the same life again and again in an eternal recurrence of the same. The strongest are life affirming, having the capacity to endure and accept the world as it is, without delusions of transcendence or an afterlife.

Nietzsche explained, will to power is the impulse to organize chaos, which results in imposing a point of view. Nietzsche describes the will to power as grounded in *the passage of time*, as the will to power wills the future, the possible, and the not-yet-determined. The will can only progress into the future as struggle, overcoming, and strides toward power. Nietzsche turns from man and god to the becoming of all things, to the cosmos as a whole and the totality of all things in the eternal return of the same. Eternal recurrence is conceived of as cyclical albeit in a

twofold sense of eternity: recurrence depends on the infinite nature of the past such that all possibilities are included for the future as it unfolds.

Nietzsche describes those who "create" value through interpretation as creators in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "Through esteeming alone is there value: and without esteeming, the art of existence would be hollow. Hear this, you creators."[194] Nietzsche variously describes such creators as artists, inventors, and even liars, as the process of interpreting the "chaos" of life results in the creation of a view that is then imposed as truth and reality delivered over not only to the self but to others as well. This reporting of reality is a selective not reporting of aspects of reality amounts to the survival of some truths and the incorporation of falsities, which is the nature of perspectival truth, the only truth available to us. When Nietzsche comments on the nature of interpretation, it is important to recall the body as the site and locus of interpretation, taking affective experiences and interpretation as inseparable processes in human experience. We see this in connection to art. Nietzsche's emphasis on bodily experience and the importance of art comes together in the way he describes art as a manner of life and tied to sensibility, a powerful way for humans to creatively transform the world.

Nietzsche did not accept Descartes' splitting of the mind and body, and instead emphasized the primary roles of instinct and thought, along with the bodily basis for instinct and thought. In *Will to Power*, Nietzsche describes interpretation and perspective as having a "starting point" in "the body and physiology. Writing in the voice of Zarathustra in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche asserts, "The soul is only a word for something about the body."[195] However, at the same time, he describes humans as caught up in social arrangements, that are

[194] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for None and All,* Trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Viking Penguin Books, 1966). 34.

[195] *Ibid.,* 34.

awareness of the world and values are affected by our social interactions and expectations. Nietzsche also described a group of exceptional persons, “super” humans capable of creativity and independence from the herd and group thinking. This kind of person was proclaimed an Übermensch (“overman” or “superman”) by the character Zarathustra, the stronger person who was able to overcome the “all--too-human.” The Übermensch, a higher and more powerful version of humanity, would live through its body, asserting bodily strength and recognizing that the soul is not a higher form of the self but an aspect of the bodied person.

6.2.2 Alfred North Whitehead

Friedrich Nietzsche and Alfred North Whitehead offer ways to understand the shift from being to becoming, to understand how it is that material beings are not closed off singularities but exist through interconnection. Both thinkers arrived at conceptions of morality through their respective conceptions of the body. Nietzsche posits the body as a kind of intermediary space, a unity amid the plurality of the world. Whitehead describes actual entities and complex entities like persons as dynamic “unities” in the process of becoming, changing and emerging as they interact with multiple other entities in the world, affected by what they experience, the datum of everyday experience. Nietzsche denies the possibility of metaphysics and systems while Whitehead offers an alternative view of (speculative) metaphysics and system-as-process, giving a broad explanation of the world and nature as organism. What we see is that both philosophers had philosophies of life, emphasized the natural world, and were very critical of traditional metaphysics. This cursory comparison between the two thinkers shows that they each provide incredible insight into thinking about the body and affectivity as we move toward a conception of the flesh.

Two things emerge from Whitehead's description of experience. One, encounters with objective content occur in a world in which we are continually edging up against other entities, coming into relation with other entities. Two, those encounters are not primarily cognitive but, instead, show that thinking and experience are possible only insofar as we move about bodily in the world.

6.2.3 Thinking About Nature

Whitehead carefully outlined the difference between thinking about nature and other forms of thinking. He wrote that nature is perceived through the senses, and that we don't have to be aware of thought in order to think about nature. This is because sense perception is not the same as reflecting on thought; sense awareness, perceiving nature, occurs without any necessary reference to the mind or the ways of the mind. Whitehead writes:

> "This closure of nature does not carry with it any metaphysical doctrine of the disjunction of nature and mind. It means that in sense-perception nature is disclosed as a complex of entities whose mutual relations are expressible in thought without reference to mind, that is, without reference to sense-awareness or to thought."[196]

A distinction between homogenous and heterogenous thought is introduced in order to highlight the way in which sense-awareness of nature only involves the factor of directly perceiving nature. Heterogenous thought involves the added element of reflecting on or thinking about sense perception of nature, thinking about the sense experience itself. A key aspect of the difference is the "direct deliverance of sense-awareness," as it is a type of experience, a way of feeling, of prehending other entities or things that is immediate.

[196] *Ibid.*, 4-5.

The procedure of thought is one step removed from direct prehension of the facts of nature. This form of thought is a relation of sense-awareness factors; associating, discriminating, and making sense of the qualities and properties of sense-awareness while also bringing those thoughts into context and comparison with past thoughts and experiences.

Whitehead describes three elements that make up our knowledge of nature: fact, factors, and entities.

> "Fact is the undifferentiated terminus of sense-awareness; factors are termini of sense-awareness, differentiated as elements of fact; entities are factors in their function as the termini of thought. The entities thus spoken of are natural entities. Thought is wider than nature, so that there are entities for thought which are not natural entities."[197]

The distinction between natural entities and "entities for thought which are not natural entities," quoting from above, is significant because it highlights how the process of "mere abstraction" produces entities for thought.[198] It shows experience as the starting point of thought. Another way to think of it is that thought is the elucidation of experience, which Whitehead considered the very criterion for philosophy.[199] Thinking on the complex of facts is not the same as experiencing those facts. Thinking is, rather, translating the facts of sense-awareness into objects of thought, objects that are no longer directly connected to facts.

6.2.4 Bifurcation of Nature

Early on in his work, Whitehead challenged the bifurcation of nature into primary and

[197] *Ibid.*, 13.

[198] Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*, 16.

[199] The second paragraph in *Process and Reality* reads, "Speculative Philosophy is the endeavor to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted." See Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 3.

secondary qualities.[200] In solving the problem of bifurcation of the world into fact and value, Whitehead gives us a way beyond the impasse created from the temptation to reduce reality to materialism or idealism, and resists the problem of subject-object relations for epistemology through his emphasis on a philosophy that involves feelings and affectivity.

In his early work, Whitehead challenged the bifurcation of nature into primary and secondary qualities. He gives us a way beyond the impasse created by reducing reality to either materialism or idealism, and resists the problem of subject-object relations for epistemology with Whitehead's emphasis on a philosophy of feelings. Whitehead's philosophy is very much a realism that grant evolution and change over time, each moment amounting to a novel event and process of becoming. To resolve the issue of the bifurcation of nature, Whitehead turned to ontology and not epistemology.

Why is the bifurcation of nature a problem? It splits our unified experiences into separate kinds of realities that cannot easily be put back together. His solution was to find an alternative way to conceive of metaphysics, one that involves an ontology of organism and relations. The terms organism and actual entities are foundational concepts within Whitehead's philosophy. Whitehead turned to ontology, not epistemology, to resolve the problem of the bifurcation of nature. Actual entities overcome the paradigm of subjects conforming to objects (?) and objects conforming to subjects. Whitehead's philosophy is very much a realism that emphasizes evolution at the ontological level, a system that changes dynamically, each moment amounting to a novel happening and process of becoming.

6.2.5 Philosophy of Organism: Basics of Process

[200] Alfred North Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*, 1920, (New York, NY: Cosimo, Inc., 2007), 27.

"Change is. Touch is. Everything we touch can change." - Carol P. Christ

Whitehead develops the concept of "individual entities" in conversation with the philosophies of Locke, Hume, Descartes, and Kant, outlining where he diverges from their presuppositions and developments especially concerning "substance." He argues that substance is an example of "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness," that such substance-entities are only abstractions that exist in the human mind.[201] Whitehead's calls his modified subject an "actual entity," an entity that emerges from a dynamic process of becoming in and through experience. The process of becoming results in two ways to describe actual entities: "One which is analytical of its potentiality for 'objectification' in the becoming of other actual entities, and another which is analytical of the process which constitutes its own becoming."[202] Actual entities exist in subject and object form, such that individuals are objectified by being realized in the experience of other actual entities. The instance of individual unity within the process is called "concrescence."

Actual entities emerge through occasions of experience; each occasion is a "synthesis" of that which is felt, the objective content, and *how* that content is felt, what Whitehead calls subjective form. Subjective form primarily influences how objective content incorporates into the synthesis of feelings, of felt experience. In other words, our constitution affects how we take in data. The data affects the person, in turn. This occurs as a kind of emotional pattern of experience, which is to say that objective content of experience is felt by the actual entity, conjuring up novel patterns of thinking, sometimes reaffirming what the actual entity previously understood, all while eliciting some emotional and affective response from the actual entity. In

[201] A.N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), 52.

[202] A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1978), 23.

other words, the subject-object relation depends on the capacity of affect, not consciousness. Insofar as an entity may be affected by another entity, it enjoys the position of subject in relation to an object. In this structure of experience, the past has an objective relationship to the present.

Actual entities participate as subject and object through prehension. This activity entails "feeling" past actual occasions (objects taken in by the subject) as an early form of consciousness, but this is not equal to intellectual consciousness. It involves three factors—the prehending subject, the datum prehended, and the form by which the subject prehends the datum. Prehension is feeling and not consciousness because it does not merely entertain datum, it participates in the datum: "A feeling appropriates elements of the universe, which in themselves are other than the subject, and absorbs these elements into the real internal constitution of its subject by synthesizing them in the unity of an emotional pattern expressive of its own subjectivity."[203] There are three factors of a prehension: the occasion of experience; datum (prehended object) that provokes the prehension; subjective form (the subject's affect). The prehending subject is objectified when it participates as datum for another entity.

Events such as actual entities are understood through analysis, which always generalizes unique events into universals. It has traditionally been understood that one can understand only universals and that particulars are understood in terms of universals. Whitehead, however, argues that we can only understand particulars because that is all that is available for analysis. Whitehead's discussion of the subjectivist principle is an attempt to go beyond the binaries of universal and particular, which has implications for interpreting the experience and process of subjects' becoming in the world. Specifically, he develops a reformed subjectivist principle that

[203] Donald W. Sherburne, *A Key to Whitehead's Process and Reality* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), 8.

challenges the subjectivist and sensationalist principles. This reformed principle also introduces a different way of understanding the subject/object relationship.

6.2.6 From Singularity to Interconnection: Whitehead's Reformed Subjectivist Principle

Whitehead articulates a world not just of a perceiving subject and perceived things. Through Whitehead's reformed subjectivist principle, as interpreted by David Ray Griffin, Whitehead conceives of a world in process, in which a subject-subject relationship best describes the nature of relationality.

There are four different definitions of the subjectivist principle offered in Whitehead's *Process and Reality.* Each definition's emphasis has important implications for premises Whitehead wants to *avoid* affirming—contra past philosophers such as Hume and Descartes. David Ray Griffin locates the definitions and summarizes their distinctions: "The first definition deals with an *epistemological* point, the datum of experience: "The subjectivist principle is, that the datum in the act of experience can be adequately analysed purely in terms of universals."[204] The second deals with a *metaphysical* point: "The subjectivist principle is that the whole universe consists of elements disclosed in the analysis of experiences of subjects."[205] The third definition also deals with a metaphysical point about the nature of reality: "The consideration of experiential togetherness raises the final metaphysical questions; whether there is any other meaning of 'togetherness,' The denial of any alternative meaning, that is to say, of any meaning

[204] From Whitehead, *Process and Reality,* 157.

[205] *Ibid.,* 166.

not abstracted from the experiential meaning, is the 'subjectivist' doctrine."[206] Finally, the fourth definition deals with a *methodological* point about the proper procedure for philosophy: "Descartes. . . laid down the principle, that those substances which are the subjects enjoying conscious experiences provide the primary data for philosophy, namely, themselves as in the enjoyment of such experience. This is the famous subjectivist bias which entered into modern philosophy through Descartes."[207] Given the multiple definitions, interpretations vary among contemporary philosophers regarding the appropriate reading of what Whitehead meant by the subjectivist principle.[208]

The subjectivist principle says that analysis is achieved only through universals, that particulars are subjected to form and typologies. The sensationalist principle says that all experience is passive entertainment of datum. This presupposes a subject, analogous to a primary and passive substance. Whitehead's *reformed subjectivist principle* demonstrates a commitment to empiricism in that all things are disclosed through and constituted by experience. There is nothing that becomes except through experience. For Whitehead, the subject does not come first. Rather, the subject is a synthesis of experiences.

The reformed subjectivist principle also asserts that every event has an objective side; it's subjective in that every object co-creates a subject, but if one goes back in time they would find that every subject is created out of objects, and objects are created by subjects. So the reformed subjectivist principle is also an objectivist principle.

[206] *Ibid.,* 189.

[207] *Ibid.,* 159.

[208] David Ray Griffin, *Whitehead's Radically Different Postmodern Philosophy* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2007), 218.

David Ray Griffin develops this theme further by dissolving binaries through a concept called *panexperientialism*—which is the idea that all actual individuals have experience.[209] Kinds of experience are not identical, however, for all actualities. This is founded on Whitehead's understanding that 'consciousness' is not strictly has a function of the brain, but of the total experience of entities that includes physical sensation. Whitehead's Perceptual Law maintains that consciousness is not the empty mind or intellectual activity waiting to be entertained by data or passively flooded with experience, but "is provoked into existence" and "constructed by experience itself."

6.2.7 Relating Whitehead to Postmodern Thought

According to Butler, subject-formation is premised by individual mutability and a denial of metaphysics of substance. This resonates with Whitehead's 'principle of process': "That *how* an actual entity *becomes* constitutes *what* that actual entity *is*; so that the two descriptions of an actual entity are not independent. Its 'being' is constituted by its becoming."[210] An actual entity, constituted through series and concrescence of prehensions, becomes by taking in sense datum in the form of past subjects, termed objects in the moment of being prehended by another subject. To say that something exists only through mutability is to similarly affirm Butler's contention that a subject is an effect of discourse: "that the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality."[211] At this point,

[209] Griffin qualifies this statement: "Excluded [from panexperientialism] are not only things with merely ideal existence such as numbers, concepts, and propositions, but also *aggregational societies* of individuals that are not themselves individuals, such as rocks" *Ibid.,* 76.

[210] Whitehead, *Process and Reality,* 22.

[211] Butler, *Gender Trouble,* 136.

however, it becomes difficult to compare subjectification and objectification through performance because it is not clear to me what the necessary conditions are in Butler's ontology—albeit her point is to resist an ontology—that enable individuals to respond to pre-conscious regulations and preconscious physicalities in the first place. Thus, Butler's argument situates the becoming of subjects within a world of language and stylization of the body through performance.

Butler's performativity resonates with Whitehead's subjectivist principle on some interesting ways. Butler is concerned with preconscious regulations that give rise to pre-conscious subjections, which is similar to Whitehead's subjectivist principle that is inseparable from the objectivist impulse. These processes are not self-creativity, causality, or discursivity alone. The processes that affect subject-identities are about experiencing pre-conscious physicalities and conceptualities. I have demonstrated two points to make a useful comparison—existence as object/subject and subject-formation/subject-identity.

Subject-identity is both product and producer. For Whitehead, the subject is always object in the interrelational process of the becoming of actual entities—the subject becomes an object for the constitution of another subject that becomes an object. Collapsing the traditional subject/object binary, but not releasing the terms altogether, allows Whitehead to affirm both creativity *and* parameters through the influence of past eternal objects taken into the experience of actual occasions. Dually participating as subject and object is expressed in Whitehead's "ontological principle": "It is the principle that everything is positively somewhere in actuality, and in potency everywhere."[212] Individuals are essentially open to possibility in their becoming,

[212] Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 40.

but only within the parameters of what past eternal objects offer as experiential datum. Comparatively, Butler argues, "In effect, to understand woman to exist on the metaphysical order of *being* is to understand her as that which is already accomplished, self-identical, static, but to conceive her on the metaphysical order of *becoming* is to invent possibility into her experience, including the possibility of never becoming a substantive, self-identical 'woman'... substantives will remain empty descriptions, and other forms of active descriptions may well become desirable."[213] Not only do both challenge substance metaphysics, but they affirm particular existence through becoming that denies identity being swallowed into universal categories. As discussed in the section on Whitehead above, universals are enforced through reflection on events—by concretizing abstractions into preconceived intelligibility.

Using the question of sex/gender to demonstrate how an individual is objectified, Butler affirms that one essentially acquires social labels through retroactive thought that "hails" one into gender. Abstractions are assumed to be concrete realities. More so, particular individuals are forced into universal categories, which can be described as a loss of the particular self for the sake of social intelligibility as a universal type: "The naming is at once the setting of a boundary, and also the repeated inculcation of a norm."[214] A tendency to separate subject-formation from subject-identity does not obtain in Whiteheadian or Butlerian thought. Social intelligibility, or identity, is simultaneously subject-formation. The genesis of a subject is an infinite regress of difference, never a temporal point of origin, but always a becoming.

6.3 The Lived-Body and Flesh

[213] Judith Butler, "Variations on Sex and Gender," in Sara Salih, *The Judith Butler Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 36-7.

[214] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 8.

In the sections that follow, we will move toward the idea of flesh is that liminal space between the visible and the invisible, a space that is not a thing but an element that does something. From the flesh, we can intuit the distinction between being and being-perceived, seer and thing, sensible body and sentient body, objective and phenomenal. We will see how a set of philosophers describe thinking as emerging from the body, how our thoughts and feelings issue forth as we experience bodily entanglement with the things of the wider world, interactions with other persons and phenomena. We will see that the body is the element and aspect of my being that constitutes such entanglement with the world. As espoused by Merleau-Ponty, ideas belong to the flesh in a very concrete way; ideas emerge and coalesce in and from the flesh. Flesh is other than matter or idea; flesh is characterized by matter and idea and is its own kind of element.

6.3.1 Maurice Merleau-Ponty

From Maurice Merleau-Ponty we learn that before thought there is touch. We can only ever experience pre-reflective being; it cannot be thought, by definition. But we can think about and reflect on pre-reflective being and perception. Thinking through the body is one way to do this, thinking about the experience of the flesh and ruminating on ideas are not entirely separate occurrences. However, it is not correct to conceive of pre-reflective being and thinking as separate moments. They are facets of the same being, parts of the self that we might find ourselves more or less attuned to. Merleau-Ponty describes the relationship between the "sensible" and the "intelligible" as a *chiasm*--the flesh.

> "Between the alleged colors and visibles, we would find anew the tissues that lines them, sustains them, nourishes them, and which for its part is not a thing, but a possibility, a latency, and a *flesh* of things."[215]

The difference between the pre-reflective being and thinking is the difference between engaging with the world on a sensible level and reflecting back on that experience to express what the meaning or impact of such an experience for a person, argues Merleau-Ponty. He develops the idea of a *sur-réflection* (hyper-reflection) to describe thinking that remains within the scope of pre-reflective engagement with the world, a way of articulating the occurrence of sensible engagement without objectifying it. Daniela Vallega-Neu suspects that maintaining the bond between the sensible and intelligible is most available in creative moments, as articulated in the following paragraph.

> This nonobjectifying hyperreflection is a reflexible awareness that lets be occurrences that are opened up to it. Such awareness for instance is required in the performing arts (in fact, I suspect that it is at play in any conscious activity that implies a truly creative moment.) I may find this reflexive awareness in certain moments in dancing or making music where I find myself aware in the event of the dance or the event of music that seems to occur in a strange way beyond my control, events in which I find myself not as an agent but rather as an absorbed as well as perceptive spectator.[216]

Before being able to conceive of bodiliness, we are pre-thematically set in the world, imminent to the world through the flesh. This first order experience of being in the world becomes a second-order "experience" when I abstract from my place in the world, when I reflect on my position and everything around me, and when investigations and thoughts objectify Being and make sense of being-in-the-world.

[215] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible,* Trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 132-3.

[216] Daniela Vallega-Neu, *The Bodily Dimension in Thinking* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 2005), 62.

Containment is not the right way to think about the relationship between seer, body, and world, if we are taking from Merleau-Ponty (or even Heidegger), as he writes that all is flesh and interacts on a porous, immanent plane. With this assertion, we have to begin thinking the visible and the invisible. The visible and invisible are related, Merleau-Ponty explains, through "reciprocal insertion and intertwining."[217] We may find ourselves trying to see the world, body, and seer as different categories. But then there is the ongoing problem of how interaction between the visible and invisible takes place. The thinking of categories becomes problematic. Merleau-Ponty looks beyond talk of dimension and existing categories of thought, to describe the visible *and* invisible--the interactivity between seer and world--in terms of the interaction of flesh. How does Merleau-Ponty define flesh, such that he can justify calling the world flesh? He has to account for an immanence of all things. He calls flesh an element of its own, one that is not material or immaterial, an element that is spatio-temporal as it also orients the person in space and time.

We are affected along different planes as touch involves three separate dimensions, Merleau-Ponty claims. There is the touch of the object, the qualities of the object, and the subjective touch of the touch touching itself. Merleau-Ponty writes, "Already in the "touch" we have just found three distinct experiences which subtend one another, three dimensions which overlap but are distinct: a touching of the sleek and of the rough, a touching of the things--a passive sentiment of the body and of its space--and finally a veritable touching of the touch, when my right hand touches my left hand while it is palpating the things, where the "touching subject" passes over to the rank of the touched, descends into the things, such that the touch is

[217] *Ibid.*, 138.

formed in the midst of the world and as it were in the things."[218] In this touch we find the subjective experience and the objectifying of an object. We find the immediate experience of tactile sensations and perhaps of vision and smell. We also find ourselves within a certain space, the space spacing as the object itself and the person's proximity to the object prompt reorientation of the self.

Before we transcend pre-reflective/pre-thematic being, one that reflects on itself, we are set within the fabric of the world, the touch of one's flesh feeling the touch of the flesh of the world, and before any idea is experience. At this point, our relation to the world by way of thought and experience can be depicted and understood in a few ways. Kant argued that what is thought is constituted by the faculty of the thinking subject. This leaves the subject at least one step removed from the world, as the world is experienced secondary to the event of thinking the world. Daniela Vallega-Neu points out, "Such traditional reflection seems to be doomed to fail what it attempts to reach, namely its own originating event and the world in which it arises."[219] On the other hand, we might then wonder if the nature of thinking is necessarily reflective, if it always requires thought reflecting back on itself and if it is possible to have an understanding of the pre-thematic/pre-reflective moment of dwelling purely as flesh touching the flesh of the world.

6.3.2 Jean-Luc Marion: Flesh and the Erotic Phenomenon

[218] Merleau-Ponty, 133-4.

[219] *Ibid*., 61.

Jean-Luc Marion writes a phenomenology of love in his book *The Erotic Phenomenon.*[220] Love is most at stake for being, as love is what defines the possibility of being and what drives a person forward, Marion argues. He reminds us that philosophy comes from a place of love - *philos.* Marion aims for a deeper phenomenological analysis, to find what might be behind or before being. Marion's philosophy finds that the gift and also love are beneath and before being, and in the mode of giveness. But giveness is not merely the mode by which we come to understand the nature of love or the erotic reduction. Giveness is a defining and sustained characteristic, not just how we come to understand but a fundamental aspect of existence. Love is what comes before being, and love is conveyed and defined by givenness. We discover that love has its own logic.

The erotic reduction is a criticism of Heidegger's claims about authenticity. Marion challenges, we can aim for an authentic life but what is the point? He grants Heidegger's point that philosophy has forgotten about Being and acknowledges the importance of inquiry into the meaning of Being and the need to ask what Being is as such. Marion pushes beyond the transcendental reduction and beyond Heidegger's ontological reduction by developing the consequences of "vanity," one of his key concepts that involves asking "what's the use?" Solipsism leads to vanity, and one must go beyond gazing at oneself in order to answer questions about what matters. We need to get beyond the consequences of Heidegger's inquiry into the meaning of being and take an even deeper look into what it means to respond to reality, to respond to this world that each person has found herself thrown into.

220 Jean-Luc Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon,* Trans. Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2007.

The structure of six reflections in Marion's book resemble the way Descartes' approached studying the need to know--his concern with certitude--within the *Meditations*. Marion points to a more primary human concern than the need for certitude: beyond the need to know is the need to be loved. Upon being thrown into the world, we are fundamentally more concerned with the question of whether we are loved than we whether we know that what we know is indubitably true. Being loved is what affords a person the greatest assurance of the meaning of Being and what Being is, as such. Marion focuses specifically on the erotic because he believes that it reveals more about being than the care-structure of Dasein does within Heidegger's philosophy.

Marion believes that the erotic gets to the essence of the phenomenological method, showing that selfhood and one's philosophical method affect and influence each other. He provides three criteria for a phenomenology of love: (1) it must provide a unified concept of love from out of the different ways in which love has been understood (charity, reason, passion); (2) those aspects of love that appear irrational (jealousy, betrayal) must be made rational); (3) it cannot begin from philosophical questions but, as a phenomenology, it must begin from the erotic phenomena themselves.[221]

Marion makes the case that *eros* and *agape* are different aspects of one love, and he shows this by giving an account of the reasons behind the impulse to love another. We seek an assurance that goes beyond the need to know what being is about, what is behind it. Love involves giving up on the need for assurance. In order to love fully one must rescind the expectation that love will be reciprocated, though one may still hope that love with be returned by the other.

[221] This breakdown is credited to Marika Rose, "Review: Jean-Luc Mario, "The Erotic Phenomenon," in *Theology and Sexuality,* Vol. 18, No. 2 (2012).

Marion's is a phenomenology of givenness, one in which a person is "rendered" (made responsible) by the face of the other and especially in the experience of touch, through which a person discovers herself as flesh. Levinas is in the background of Marion's thought. To encounter a face, the face of the other, is to encounter an "endless hermeneutic." Some have observed that the longer one person loves another, the more mysterious they become to each other. Rather than developing a complete understanding of one's significant other, the sense I have of the other person is deepened and enlarged: the person who is closest to me develops nuances and added depth. I cannot objectivize these phenomena, but I am responsible in that its being given over to me demands a response, albeit in the form of a counter-experience. Marion writes, "Far from being able to constitute this phenomenon, the *I* experiences itself as constituted by it."[222] I am forced to renegotiate my identity and to incorporate what I have seen and experienced in this other face, thus fundamentally redetermining the sort of person that I am. Heidegger writes along this line of thought, "In his essential receptive-perspective relatedness to what addresses him from his world openness, the human being is also already called upon to respond to it by his comportment."[223] We see that this is an ethical situation, as it forces a person beyond the issue of the meaning of being and into the realm of actions and decisions.

Marion analyzes saturated phenomena that is characterized by "excess." I intuit the phenomena that I grasp, that is given over to me, as in excess of what I grasp in that moment. Phenomena appear as events. "To the objects themselves" works only if the objects are given over to us, so they are not merely of our own construction or emerge through the filter of the

[222] Jean-Luc Marion, *The Visible and the Revealed,* Trans. Christina M. Gschwandtner. New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2008, 44.

[223] Martin Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars: Protocols--Conversations--Letters,* Ed. Medard Boss (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 231.

categories of thought. Marion writes in *Being Given*, "What *shows itself* first *gives itself*--this is my one and only theme."[224] This is the very condition of phenomenology, and it leads to the very nature of experience--the call of the object and the opportunity for one to respond. (There is a resemblance here to process thought.) These are the reasons why love is the proper lens through which to approach questions of truth, meaning, and experience. To love unconditionally is to allow a thing to be what it is and to love it exactly so. This is what disinterested, non-objectivizing love looks like. It acknowledges the character of a thing or a person's "excess" nature. I am unable to reduce the event to an object; it is always more than that. The Erotic Reduction also underscores the affective nature of experience, that to experience the event of an object is to be affected and changed by the encounter.

So we see that flesh and the nature of contact truly forms us, and it forms us in multiple ways. I am affected by the person or thing I come into contact with, the spaces I inhabit for any length of time impact my interior and exterior life (those two aspects of my being are not entirely separate). But I am also formed by the ways I consciously and subconsciously respond to what and whom I come into contact with. I am changed externally and internally, changed through my choices and by the unavoidable that happens to me.

Jean-Luc Marion writes about how the Erotic Reduction is also an ethical situation. I want to know what the meaning of everything is. Vanity causes me to ask, but what's the use? There is no answer but love, to be loved. The question that really goes to the core of who I am and what life means is, does anyone love me? In seeing the face of the other, I do not merely observe something. I relate to that person; I experience the other and I am put into the position of responding. How I respond characterizes me as a person.

[224] Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 5.

This is also a shift in the conception of the subject, one that cannot devolve into solipsism as it remains turned out toward others, responding to others. Experience and the subject are no longer conceived without a context and situation; we admit that there is no unattached subject that originates, thinks, or persists in a vacuum of space.

There are a few significant issues with Marion's work, however. One has to do with depicting touch as essentially an erotic phenomenon and the other has to do with the heteronormative character of love. Not ironically but, rather, unfortunately, Marion's own conception of the subject still depicts a specific kind of subject--the male, masculine, heterosexual that has long been projected as a universal figure in philosophy.

The takeaway from reading Marion is the distinction between body and flesh. We have to first avoid the impulse to take flesh as reducible to the physical. We think of the flesh as that which touches and feels, as that which feels itself touch: "it only touches bodies in feeling itself touch them."[225] The experience is an erotic one, Marion believes, as he depicts the nature of touch in erotic terms. He describes the nature of touch between lovers as a crossing of flesh; the flesh of each does not combine or merge into one but they do take up the closest sort of proximity and dwelling without losing the integrity of their separate natures.

6.4 Flesh and the Relevance to Art

Drawing from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Mayra Rivera articulates a corporeal schema that functions as a dialectic between the body and the world, a philosophical apparatus that connects metaphysical claims, epistemology, and ethics. In her recent book *Poetics of the Flesh,* Rivera

[225] Marion, *The Erotic Reduction*, 38.

describes an ontology that "attends to the body and the sensible world," an epistemology that "acknowledges the limits and provisional character of all finite knowledge," and an ethic affirming a "world common to us all."[226] Rivera's corporeal schema relies on a notion of "flesh" as the tie between the body and the world, and formulates the material and relational aspects of bodily becoming. In doing so, she is able to avoid biological essentialisms that define the body within natural categories, as well as those discourses that relegate the body to the realm of linguistic discourse in an attempt to avoid metaphysics of substance.

In order to show the corporeal schema at work, Rivera incorporates art in a broad sense and poetics more specifically. She illustrates how art and poetry are born of flesh and, conversely, how the body and the world are affected by the aesthetic experience.

> Expression takes place between the sensible world and the worlds of languages. The individual act of speaking is "a fold in the immense fabric of language." Words depend on the materiality of bodies and the world that nourishes them. Likewise, meaning (*sense*) depends on the signs through which it signifies. But the writer, like the painter, is not a passive manipulator of signs—writing is "never a result," but rather a "response."[227]

Rivera conceives of flesh as the becoming of relations, the intersection of social and material relations that fundamentally changes space and bodies. Flesh is not the only kind of thing that emerges at the intersection of social and material relations. As sculpture becomes a new thing--a new body--it is conceived and effected by human impulses, it emerges in a space and changes that space, affecting those persons who will inhabit that space for some length of time. Sculpture affects those who are in close enough proximity to it.

While we cannot say what sculpture is affected by any more than we can articulate what it is like to be a bat, Whitehead--or, more rightly, David Ray Griffin--would emphasize that non-

[226] Mayra Rivera, *Poetics of the Flesh* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 84.

[227] Rivera, 83.

human entities are affected, that they have some kind of experience as an actual entity. A sculpture was a one point the effect of the work of human hands. But sculpture is not flesh. Humans are affected and shaped by those things that we come into contact with. Contact takes different forms. I am contacted by touch, remote communication, memory, and the anticipation of what will be. To be a fleshy person means that I have a porous nature. Even holding something or someone at bay, wanting that thing or person to no longer affect me, shows that I have already been changed and affected by that person, and so I respond by, for example, withdrawing.

We have seen thinkers such as Nietzsche, Whitehead, and Merleau-Ponty argue that thinking arises in the body. Thinking emerges from experiencing bodily entanglement with the things of the wider world, Karen Barad tells us, emerging from interactions with other persons and phenomena. The body is the factor and aspect of my being that constitutes entanglement with the world. As espoused by Merleau-Ponty, ideas belong to the flesh in a very concrete way; ideas emerge and coalesce in and from the flesh, such that flesh is other than matter or idea. Flesh is characterized by both and is its own kind of element. For this reason, a person cannot be reduced to either matter or idea. Flesh has depth and is porous, so that corporeality steeps in the social and material context--submerged, affected by, and affecting what co-exists within close or immediate proximity. Who can tell how far the sphere of influence, touch, and affectivity widens?

Space is not an empty container for bodies and objects. Space is the context and medium of relational contact; spatiality is a characteristic of bodies in relation. We belong to the world as Being-in-the-world, in such a way that the limits of our bodies are also the beginning, the extension, of the materiality of space. This rendering of corporeality involves a bodying forth of

one's being, such that the liminal space between one entity and others involves a point that renders the meeting in a state of affectivity. Heidegger writes that to be "affectively self-finding" is a formal ontological structure that he terms *Befindlichkeit.*

Perception *is* sensory experience, and what some would describe as embodied experience (to use the problematic term "embodied"). *Befindlichkeit* is the German term for being in a mood and feeling, translated as self-finding or the way in which one finds oneself. To be human means to experience moods, understanding, and speech. *Befinden* refers to finding oneself in a certain state, mood, or affect. If a person asks, "Wie befinden Sie sich?" then they are asking, "How do you find yourself?" In light of *befinden, Befindlichkeit* is Heidegger's way of saying how-are-you-ness, which is a state of being. Heidegger describes us as always "in" a situation, responding to a state of things, and experiencing those contexts in an affective mode (i.e., moods arising from how a person senses the situation). *Befindlichkeit* collapses the distinction between the interior and exterior self. Being in a situation is always a specific kind of bodily experience, an experience that occurs in the concrete context of space but seen from the inside-out. Space is not an empty container for bodies and objects. Space is the context and medium of relational contact; spatiality is a characteristic of bodies in relation. We belong to the world as Being-in-the-world, in such a way that the limits of our bodies are also the beginning, the extension, of the materiality of space. This rendering of corporeality involves a bodying forth of one's being, such that the liminal space between one entity and others involves a point of affectivity. Heidegger writes that to be "affectively self-finding" is a formal ontological structure that he terms *Befindlichkeit.*[228] Disclosive affectivity is central to illuminating ontological structures of

[228] See Robert D. Stolorow, *World, Affectivity, Trauma: Heidegger and Post-Cartesian Psychoanalysis* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 25.

existence. Mood is a state of being that cannot be reduced to one lens of explanation. Mood (*Befindlichkeit*) merits discussion as phenomena that is both ontic and ontological in nature. Ontically, mood involves the lived-body, what Heidegger would later describe as a bodying forth. Ontologically, mood is one of a variety of ways by which Dasein is disclosed as being-in-the-world. Hence, we can maintain the categorical distinction between ontic and ontological as mood is described as a multifaceted experience in being human.[229]

Art is a way to understand the mutually "dependent" ideas of world, flesh, and lived-body.[230] World and flesh/lived-body are not just ideas or concepts, however. They are processes and experiences, and also ontological structures. When it comes to world and flesh, ontic and ontological are not mutually exclusive categories. The structures of world and flesh, insofar as world encompasses time and space, and emerges in time and space, and flesh is the way in which the world is experienced, are not reducible to the categories of ontic or ontological.

Sculpture is a way to understand the mutually dependent ideas/concepts of space and body. Andrew Mitchell's book on *Heidegger Among the Sculptures* dwells on exactly these themes, as we have seen elsewhere. Space does not merely contain bodies. Space is changed by those bodies. Humans dwell in space in a bodily way, as is referred to by the term "embodiment." The latter term is already full of meaning, in that em/bodiment is a way of existing inside something, being contained or housed by that thing. A corporeal body is a materiality that dwells in space. All bodies change the quality of the space(s) they inhabit, and space affects what it means to be that corporeal thing. Not all bodies are affected by the space

[229] See R. Stolorow (2011) and S.N. Elkholy, *Heidegger and a Metaphysics of Feeling: Angst and the Finitude of Being*, (London: Continuum, 2008).

[230] Flesh and lived-body are not interchangeable concepts, as should be clear by now. Flesh enjoys a material basis without being reducible to materiality. Live-body is the experience of one's body, to be a body.

they inhabit, to be affected in a subjective sense. But a corporeal being is caught up in the space in a subjective sense.

If sculpture enacts a confrontation with space, as Heidegger argues, then something is confronting space. In a metaphysical sense, location--a locale--always precedes space, as Heidegger described in "Building Dwelling Thinking." In that same essay, he described the relation between a locale and a space as emerging out of the fourfold, and a fourfold appears when a thing is identified as the thing that it is. Sculpture, for example, is possible if there is a place for it. The place in which the sculpture emerges appears simultaneously with the spacing of space.

Why distinguish between space and place at all? Place emerges insofar as space is the happening of a place. "Placing," so to speak, is the result of a happening, i.e., when something takes place, like a sculpture. Heidegger writes, "Things themselves are place and do not merely belong in a place."[231] So it is with the "spacing" of space. Artistic space emerges with the happening of art in a space. Art spaces the space and art takes place.

In the essay "Art and Space," Heidegger suggests the availability of "artistic space" even as he admits the possibility that the "peculiarity of space" itself is unknown. He points to three different views of space when he writes the following.

> The space within which the sculpted formation can be encountered as an available object; the space that the volume of the figure encloses; the space that subsists as emptiness between volumes--are not these three spaces, in the unity of their interplay, always merely derivatives of the one physical-technological space, even if calculative measurements are not permitted to interfere with artistic formation?[232]

[231] Martin Heidegger, "Art and Space," in *The Heidegger Reader*, 308.

[232] *Ibid.*, 307.

In the first instance mentioned, Heidegger points to the subjective view of space. In the second, he means the space inhabited by the sculpture. In the third case, he zooms out and references the "uni" space of all parts of space contained as one (i.e., the one and the many).

What remains to be discussed is the sensory experience of nature and its impact on consciousness and perception. A hoodoo is nature's counterpart to human made sculpture. Hoodoos are elaborate rock formations caused by erosion and weathering processes in arid basins, as found in Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah and Chiricahua National Monument in Arizona. When I observed hoodoos for the first time and I inhabit my own space of experience among the formations, I was reminded of what it felt like to stand within Richard Serra's elegant, expansive steel sculpture called Band. The effect of being among the hoodoos and being among Serra's sculpture was very similar. I was within the space of great formations, and I felt transported and enclosed at the same time. I immediately wondered about the work of art in the natural setting, nature's "installations," so to speak, those formations that have an other-worldly effect and leave a lasting impression. The space of a hoodoo or steel sculpture is inseparable from the space of all things albeit while creating--spacing--their own space: the spacing of space in the experiences I described. What occurs for a person in those instances is an orientation within the spacing of space and a reorientation in the larger picture, in the space of all spaces.

I opened this project with lines from the first stanza of Adrienne Rich's poem entitled "Waking in the Dark." I will close by meditating on the last stanza, allowing the poem to speak for itself: "But this is the saying of a dream / on waking / I wish there were somewhere / actual we could stand / handing the power-glasses back and forth / looking at the earth, the wildwood / where the split began."[233]

[233] Adrienne Rich, *Diving Into the Wreck: Poems 1971-1972* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1973), 7-10.

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